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THE MOBILE ENTERTAINER'S MAGAZINE • WWW.MOBILEBEAT.COM

ISSUE 164 JULY 2015

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Bad Day (explicit) Date: 20140725		Adria	Pop Rap	0:03:59
Black Widow Date: 20140725		Buffy	Rap	0:03:48
Chandelier Date: 20140725		Buffy	Pop	0:03:58
Don't Date: 20140725		Buffy	Pop	0:03:56
Don't Try To Carry An Elephant Date: 20140725		Adria	Children's Songs	0:03:26
Don't Try To Carry An Elephant Date: 20140725		SB	Children's Songs	0:03:26
Don't Try To Carry An Elephant Date: 20140725		SB	Multiple	0:03:26
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SUMMER REFRESHMENT



20 DJ Style at Every Age



24 Songs for Summer Fun



48 Mobile Movies Part 2: Gigs & Legalities

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TRACK ONE

I have to admit, even though we assigned the catch-all-type topic "Summer Refreshment" to the July issue on our editorial calendar, the sub-topic of "DJ Fashion: How Do You Look" from that same document has ended up being the prime focus of this issue. Not that we are offering some kind of entertainers' garment catalog, although there is some discussion of specifically how DJs present themselves visually (see Staci Nichols' cover story, "DJ Style at Any Age"). No, it's more like a chance to take a step back, look in the mirror, and think about how you look on a deeper level.

Arnoldo Offermann's piece on the bugaboo of so-called "standards" for DJs provides ample food for thought about how you—in other words, your brand—appears to your clients and potential audiences. His exhortation to find your own style, is something many of us need to be reminded of repeatedly, since it's so easy to fall into the trap of mimicking others.

Mike Ficher also weighs in with the simple question, "Who are you?" and so offers another angle on self-reflection. Your personality and performance style need to be in sync for you to come across as a truly authentic performer.

We do also hit some "summery" notes in the following pages, though. Jay Maxwell provides another great song list, this time full of tunes for a summer "soundtrack," along with great advice for making your summer events the best they can be.

And Mike Ryan, who hails from the land of "endless summer" (San Diego) shares a personal story about the healing, sustaining capacity of music, as he describes his long-time love for the band that will always embody summer for many of us, the Beach Boys.

All this sits alongside our usual buffet of gear reviews, performance ideas, industry news, entertainer profiles, and business advice.

So, pour yourself some iced tea (or whatever), sit back, relax and enjoy some refreshing summer DJ reading.

– Dan Walsh, Editor-in-Chief

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Taffer on Marketing the DJ Experience

Mobile Beat welcomes Jon Taffer, the tough-talking "fixer" of SpikeTV's *Bar Rescue*, as the Celebrity Keynote for MBLV20, the 20th Anniversary Mobile Beat Las Vegas event. His presentation will focus on how the growing trend of "Experience Marketing" can benefit serious DJ businesses. Just like nightclub owners, DJ/entrepreneurs can learn to go beyond simply selling services to promoting and providing a complete "experience" for their clients—and Taffer will show how. Come to MBLV20 to catch his powerful presentation, participate in a Q&A and enjoy an extended meet and greet on Wednesday of Mobile Beat Las Vegas.

He draws on experience gained during decades in hospitality management, expertise that led to a position at the pinnacle

of that industry as president of the Nightclub & Bar Media Group, which includes the Nightclub & Bar Show and Magazine.

MBLV20 marks not only 20 years of Mobile Beat Las Vegas events, but also 25 years of the magazine that was the launch pad for the DJ industry's leading educational/trade event. Don't miss the celebration, at the New Tropicana Las Vegas, March 14-17, 2016. Register now at www.mobilebeat-lasvegas.com. Jon Taffer - Host of Spike TV's "Bar Rescue"



Energetic and commanding television star, businessman, author and orator extraordinaire, Jon Taffer is also the Wall Street Journal best-selling author of *Raise The Bar*. An internationally recognized, award-winning restaurant operator, owner and concept developer, Taffer is the leading industry voice with over 30 years of hands-on experience in the restaurant, bar and nightclub business, having consulted for over 800 businesses in his career. As one of only six inductees into the Nightclub Hall of Fame, Taffer is also the holder of such distinctions as "Pub Master," "Operator of the Year" and winner of "Property of the Year."

Taffer's overarching philosophy is this: All business is about creating the right reactions in your customers. Even better: You can control those reactions to a very large degree.

Getting the Team Back Together!

MBLV20, the 20th Anniversary event and celebration of 25 Years of Mobile Beat Magazine will be a result of a year long process of planning and production. Immediately after the last event in February, Mobile Beat event management started the ball rolling on the milestone event. One of the key elements of MBLV19's industry-shaking success was the stellar team that was assembled to make it happen -- so, first on the MBLV20 to-do list was to bring as many members of that team back together as possible.

MBLV19 ROCKED

Jeremy Brech, MBLV19 Lighting Director said "Being a part of Mobile Beat 2015 was an experience that I will never forget and I know many attendees will never forget. Going into the show last year there was much anticipation on how Mobile Beat was going to make the "experience" happen. I was fortunate to work with some of the best talent and industry leaders. Industry leaders

such as the sound professionals of Electro-Voice and the lighting pros of Chauvet DJ, along with talented MCs such as Bill Hermann and Jason Jones, the one and only Jason Jani as the event DJ, and Jake and the stellar staff of BCP Live."

"Jake, my partner in BCP Live, and his staff, including Joe Quinn and Brad Dunsbergen, were the point people that made this event all go so smoothly," says Ryan Burger, Publisher of Mobile Beat. "I was just told when and where they needed me, and enjoyed the event immensely."

"And then there was Josh Yawn working with Mike Buonaccorso and myself on the getting people there and working with the presenters." Ryan continued.

"Mobile Beat had some major goals for the 2015 show, and they blew them all away. MBLV had more full pass attendees than any other Las Vegas DJ conference since 2006 including 60% more than the 2014 MBLV show. The Tuesday night party at the Tropicana with DJ Jazzy Jeff and Sir Mix-A-Lot was amazing, and other events like the DigiGames Game Night and DJ TakeOver were fantastic!

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Ryan said that the only way it can be topped is by starting with the crew that "did such amazing things in February and by giving them even more room to dream! Thus, the team is in place to go even further."

UP NEXT: A SPECTACULAR MBLV20

There were many questions about how the new approach for 2015 would go over, until attendees actually entered "The Mobile Beat Experience," architected and hosted by Bill Hermann and Jason Jones. Once they were immersed in it, the DJs in attendance had nothing but rave reviews to share.

Jeremy, who recently signed on as MBLV20 Lighting Director, spoke about how attendees were saying, "Good luck on topping this next year!"

"Well let me promise you, WE WILL!" he says. "Last year we had

Jeremy, continued, "I am excited to be working with Jason Jani and with the newest gear from Chauvet DJ. I personally will make sure that the lighting production will be nothing less than amazing. In 2016 you will want to make sure you don't miss a single day because of the surprises we have in store for all the attendees. If you thought last year was good, wait until you experience MBLV20!"

DJ Jason Jani, who recently signed on as Event DJ and Chief Entertainment Officer, did a great job of summing up how the success of MBLV19 will lead to even greater things at MBLV20: "Mobile Beat 2015 changed the game in so many different ways and we are pumped to take things to another level in 2016. New venue, incredible talent, amazing production, a trade show floor filled with the latest technology and offerings, a nightlife event that will spin the minds of all in attendance, and content that any DJ can use to better themselves and their business. Last year we changed the game, this year we raise the bar.

"My job is to bring all these talents together into one cohesive show that blows everybody away, and I'm ready for it!" said Jake Feldman, of BCP Live.

With Jake, Jason, Jeremy, Brad, Josh, Mike and Ryan onboard, with the addition of Jeff Scott Gould from SCE, the

base of the team is in place. Chauvet DJ and Electro-Voice are signed to bring back their parts of the experience. Stay tuned for announcements of presenters, the host, and other excitement. Go to MobileBeatLasVegas.Com to find out more information about the show, and our new host hotel, the Tropicana Las Vegas. **MB**

about three strong months of planning and this year the planning has already been put into place. I know working with BCP Live, Electro-Voice, ScreenWorks, and Chauvet DJ, this will be the show of a lifetime."



EV at MBLV

One of the largest exhibitors and supporters of Mobile Beat Las Vegas, audio manufacturer Electro-Voice (EV) has announced their renewed involvement with the big anniversary event.

"Electro-Voice is thrilled to once again participate in MBLV!" says Michael Doucot, EV's Product Marketing Manager for Portable Sound, North America. "After an amazing showing for us last year, we have been working hard to find ways to

make the production level even better at the Tropicana! EV would like to show attendees how professional production should be done as well as take that a step further at MBLV20 and help educate the group on audio fundamentals.

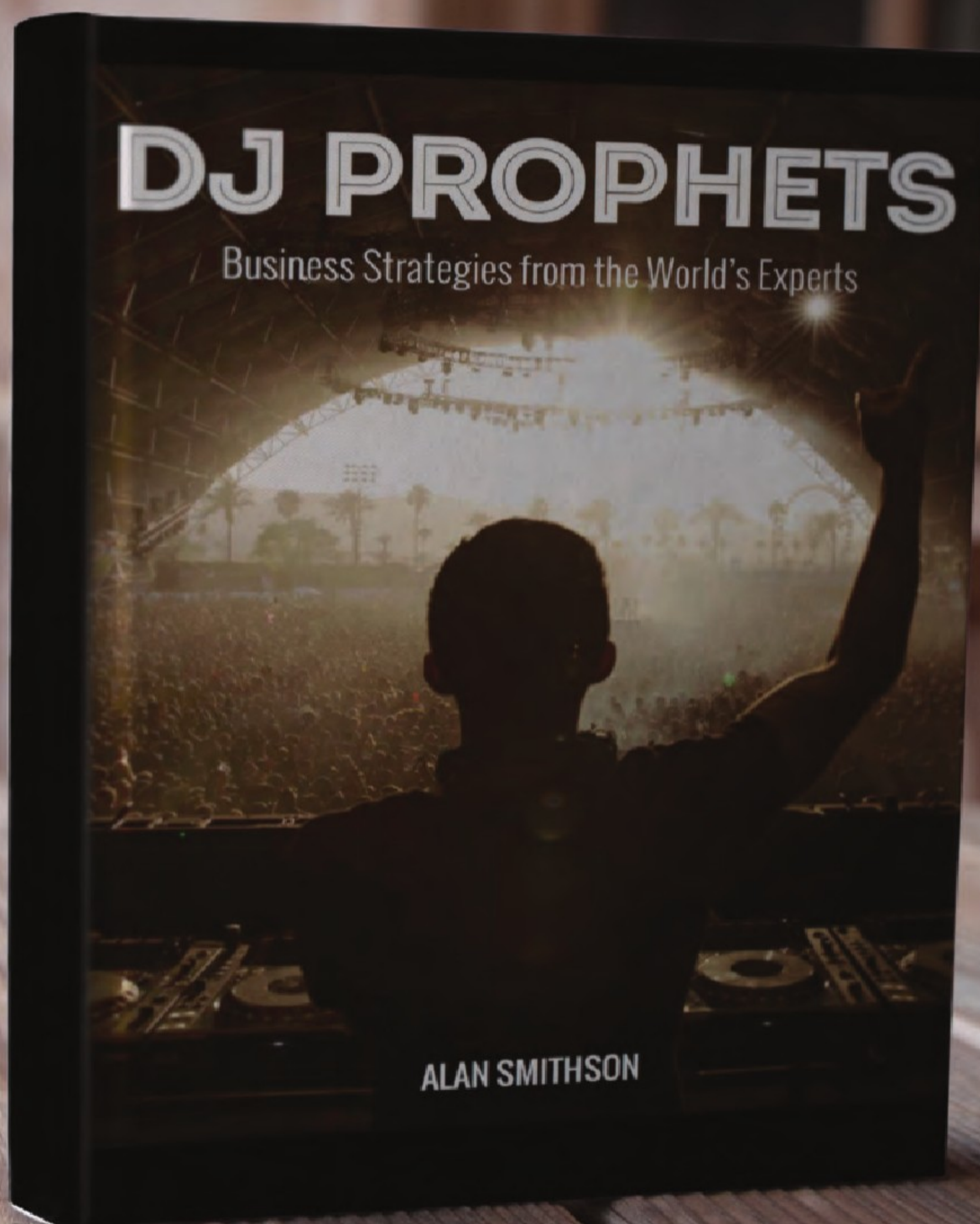
"In addition," Doucot continues, "we have spent a lot of time with attendees of this show over the years

and with their help, EV has developed many products with this group specifically in mind. As a result, EV now sells more powered loudspeakers than any other brand in the world! MBLV20 will help EV set the tone for another great year as we show new products again and demo them for the first time to users!"



Focus on your Passion, Automate your Business

You are a DJ, your passion is making and playing music. If you are like most artists, you are amazing at your passion, but not at the business side. I have assembled nearly two decades of my personal experience as well as some of the world's experts in one book to help give you the tools necessary to automate and grow your business (and believe me, DJ'ing is a business).



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Standards of the DJ Industry?

WHOSE STANDARDS?!

By Arnolando Offerman

There are so many DJ-oriented groups on Facebook...there are SO many. I'm pretty sure I've talked about this before. With many groups come many DJs from all around the world, and all sorts of backgrounds. With this diverse melting pot of DJ-hood, there are many opinions. Many of these opinions have absolutely zero basis yet have become a standard for one reason or another. When questioned, it seems no one can answer why some "standards" have become so. I'm here to whine and gripe about said standards,

DJs use facades? Well, it makes the setup look cleaner, which gives off a better presentation. Most importantly, a clean setup gives off a very important first impression and helps brand your company...

Helps brand your company. HELPS BRAND YOUR COMPANY.

How the h-e-double-hockey-sticks are you branding your company when your setup looks exactly like everyone else's? Ready for a fun exercise? I'm going to describe about 75% of Mobile Beat's readership: A facade with two speakers that have covers on them. I bet I nailed that right in the head for most of you. I'm betting many of you are ready to send me hate mail. Well, fine, do it...because I'll reply with a link to buy my *Master School Dances* series. (Haha.) I'm not saying don't use a facade, but I am saying don't

use it just because someone online told you so. EVERY PIECE of equipment should fit your business plan. With a facade, you should have a reason why you want/need one, what it will do for your presentation, and how it will help your marketing. You can't tell me your facade will

make you look "more professional" when you look like so many other DJs. With some thought, you CAN make it different. I'll use my friend Jason Jani as an example, he uses a facade, but when you walk into one of his events, you know it's an SCE event.

Me? I chose a totally different setup. (See photo above.)

and maybe drop some marketing knowledge bombs while I'm at it.

Oh, and I'm not even touching the Sync or Turntable debate, you can just flush that down the toilet.

"YOU NEED TO USE A FACADE"

Ok, now I know I've griped about this before. WHY? Why do I need to use a facade? Ok, I get it, it keeps the setup looking clean, especially if the DJ sucks with cord management. So what's my gripe? Everyone's setup looks EXACTLY THE SAME! Let's break this down: Why do

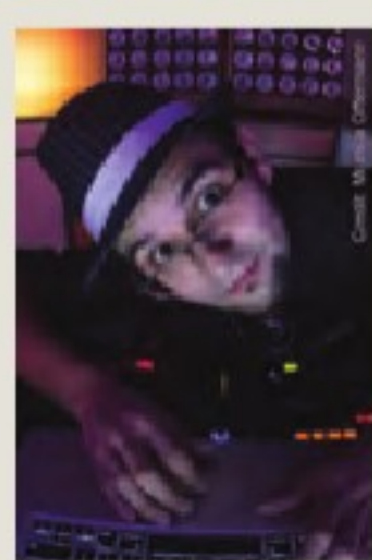
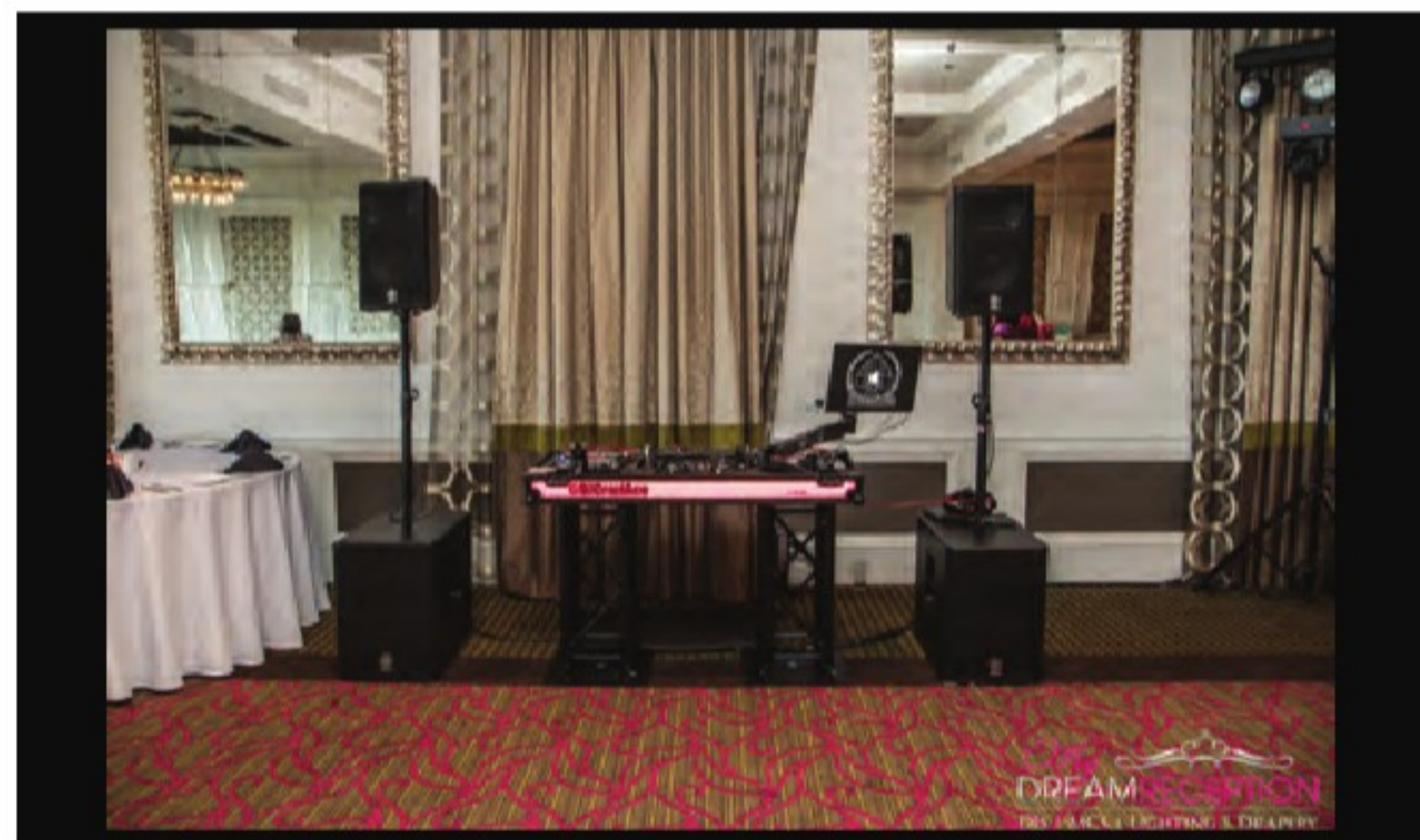
"YOU NEED SUBS"

Now, I use subs. I love bass; heck, I'm friends with Thrill da Playa of the 69 Boyz, the bass king himself. I installed car audio, I competed for loud bass. I live, breathe, eat bass. Meghan Trainor ain't got NOTHIN' on me, son! That being said, as a mobile DJ, I don't get the "need" for subwoofers. Yes, it helps give a much fuller sound and reduces stress on your main tops, but in this day and age where people are listening to so much from 3" speakers, I would say it's safe to say that subs aren't as crucial anymore. "Arnoldo, you're full of it!" Well, I do feel bad saying that, but tell me which of the two phrases mobile DJs



hear most from their clients: "The bass is amazing! You're a real DJ now!" or "Can you turn down the bass?"

Yes, subs are a wonderful addition to a complete sound system, but you know what? I've done events without them, and I've done them with them. Same crowd and client (different dates) and no one has told me any different. Maybe they noticed, maybe they didn't; but my performance wasn't affected. With that in mind, I know not everyone can afford the best sound system off the bat, so I leave you with this advice: It makes more sense to buy a good set of tops and add subs later on than buying crappy tops and subs. I'll take 50% of a great sounding system over 100% of doo-doo sound any day.



Arnolando Offerman is the creator of the video series *Master School Dances* and author of *R U Rockin' with the Best?! He has helped DJs worldwide become market leaders in school dances. In a soft economy flooded with \$500 school dance DJs, Arnolando enjoys watching 4SchoolsOnly yield dances of 10-20x that price tag. Learn more about his wildly successful series packed with ideas that actually work at www.MasterSchoolDances.com.*

“YOU SHOULD BE WEARING ____”

Really? Now DJs are telling other DJs what to wear? Look, I’ve said this in my videos many times (located at MasterSchoolDances.com, end shameless plug), you wear what fits your branding best, and make sure you’re comfortable with it. For example, at weddings, I wear a vest, color matching tie, and I don’t wear dress shoes. Instead, I wear what I call dress tennis shoes. Whether it’s the Chuck Taylor inspired Guess-brand shoes, or a well-fitting Jordan (depending on the wedding), it fits my branding. Yet, I, and others with various strategies, get others telling us what to wear.

Before you argue with a magazine, as if I’m reading what you’re saying, just remember that not even 10 years ago, DJs argued that you had to wear a TUXEDO to a wedding.

“YOUR MCING ISN’T POLISHED. YOU NEED TO DO IT LIKE THIS...”

Uhhh...says who? Your MC style, like everything else in this article, needs to fit your brand. Whatever style fits you, do it well; don’t fall into the trap that you have to be some stuffy stick in the mud. What has made Ryan Seacrest so successful (like him or not) is that he’s engaging, polished, and yet relaxed. Look at Nick Cannon (America’s Got Talent) as he cracks jokes, dances, or even plays pranks on the judges. The MC should keep everyone entertained in a manner that fits the audience and is within the MC’s brand.

“I’VE BEEN DJING FOR 20/30/ETC YEARS. I HAVE EXPERIENCE”

I’m hoping the DJ industry isn’t the only one with this silly thinking. Sure, if you’ve been in the game for a while you’ve collected some gems or found ways to make the job easier. This doesn’t make you better, or more experienced for that matter. One could be a DJ for 20 years, but if they’ve only done 10 events a year, is that more experience than an aggressive marketer who’s done 50 events a year for only 7 years? Even without bringing numbers in to the argument, someone could only be doing this for a tenth the time of another person and they could spin circles around them. I’ll use myself as an example. When I started doing school dances, even today, I get people (even in my own market) who try and tell me that schools don’t pay for dances and they know this because they’ve done this for xx years so they know better.

Uhhh, no.



**Whatever style
fits YOU,
do it well.**

So if you have someone with “experience” tell you not to think outside of the box... shut them out. Use common sense, of course. I saw one too many DJs do a “Deez Nutz” drop at a school dance (that’s a big NO NO) and not listen to anyone’s

advice. In short, a good business person should know what advice to filter out.

So yeah, these “standards.” I’ve no idea where they came from, but they bug me. It’s time you created your own standards for your business. **MB**

Every Little Thing You Do (Revisited)

SO MANY THINGS TO DO, SO LITTLE TIME...

By Joe Bunn



Joe Bunn started his DJ career at age 14, when his mom drove him to gigs in her wood-paneled Jeep Wagoneer. His company now does about 400 weddings a year and another 200+ private, corporate and charity events. He has been on the board of both ISES and NACE, founded the Triangle DJ Association, and has also won numerous industry awards. Recently, he has been helping other DJs grow their businesses as a consultant. He has also presented at major industry events, including MBLV. For more info go to www.bunndjcompany.com.

I'm sure you were all at Mobile Beat Las Vegas 2015 and attended my seminar, "Every Little Thing You Do Is Magic." You know, the one where everyone gave me a standing ovation at the end. Oh wait, never mind, that part didn't happen, that was Mark Ferrell. But anyway, if you missed it, you missed some great info on all the small things that you should be doing as a DJ company owner to improve your business. Lucky for you, in this article, I am going to review some of the points I made in Las Vegas, elaborate on some others, and add a few more. Consider this your summer refresher course.

I think the easiest way to tackle such a broad subject is to break it down into segments.

1. Things you should be doing at the office.
2. Things you should be doing at the event.
3. And finally, things you should be doing after the event.

When I'm at the office, one of the main things that I'm working on is marketing. It's one of the things that I am most passionate about. An element of marketing is branding. Great branding is one of the reasons that we became so popular in our area. Years ago, when we re-branded and adopted our "play button" logo, business literally exploded. We spent a lot of money for that symbol, new cards, and the slogan that we used for a long time "I Know Joe." Why couldn't I have come up with that? The main point that I want to make about branding is consistency. If you go look at my site you'll see that it matches my cards which match my pop up banners and so on. Trust me, this is crucial for clients that are seeking a DJ. If they keep seeing your brand around at trade shows, in wedding magazines, etc., they are going to know that you are a legitimate company and will trust you to DJ their event.

Another thing that takes up a lot of my time in the office is keeping up with my fellow vendors, most importantly the ones at the venues that recommend and refer us. As you've probably noticed, turnaround in the hospitality industry is high. So and so leaves to have a baby, So and so leaves to go to another hotel in another state, etc. It's very frustrating to build a relationship with someone for years, get in good with them, get tons of leads from them and then have them leave you in the dust right? Well dust yourself off and start over. Find out who the next person is going to be, make it a point to meet them at the next NACE or ISES meeting, ask if you can take them to lunch or coffee, send them a gift basket congratulating them on their new job. Do whatever it takes to remain on that holy grail preferred vendors list!

A few other things that I do when I'm in the office and have some free time (just kidding, there is no such things as free time):

Write a blog. Take a few minutes every Monday to write a blog and include some photos from your past weekend's event. You'll be shocked at how much people love to read about other folks' weddings.

Shoot a video. I'm a big fan of shooting informational videos and posting them to YouTube. Why? YouTube is the second leading search engine next to Google. In other words, it drives more traffic to your site, which leads to bookings, which leads to money.

Get ready for your next show. Contact your client a few days before the show and "advance" the gig. In other words, make sure you are saying the names in the introductions correctly, make

sure their first dance is still "Wonderful Tonight," etc. Also, take the time to put all of their requests and special dances into a playlist. It will help tremendously once you get to the open dancing.

Write. Yes, I know nobody writes letters, thank you cards, and birthday cards anymore, but I do. Nothing screams "old school cool" like sending someone a hand-written note. I do it not only for my couples, but also vendors that I adore.

Let's move on and talk about some tips you should be doing while at your events. Appearance is everything to me. Yes, it's cliché, but the statement "you only get one chance to make a first impression" is so true. Assess what you are wearing to the event. Is it appropriate? Is it in line with what the guests are going to be wearing? Maybe it's time for a new suit with more narrow lapels and a skinnier tie? Maybe it's time to ditch the all black Reeboks for some proper Cole Haan dress shoes? Another thing you need to do is set up your gear (at home), and then step back and take a look. Are your speaker cables Velcro strapped to the back of the tripod stands? Are the cables coming out of your controller tucked under or around the side? They should be!

There are a few more tips that I want to share with you about things you should be doing at the event.

Not only is it important that you get an agenda from the client or the planner, but make sure you review it, know it, learn it, love it. Better yet, make copies to hand out to the other vendors working with you!

I don't care how awesome the wedding planner that you are working with is, by no means do you let them line up the bridal party. Grab your clipboard and your list and walk out in that hallway and do it yourself. Say everyone's name directly to their faces to make sure you are nailing the pronunciation.

You should be arriving at least an hour early to set up for your gig. If you are like me, then it's usually two hours early. It takes me about 20-30 minutes to set up for a wedding. In that extra time, how nice would it be for you to offer the staff help with tying chair covers or lighting candles? Even if they don't take you up on it, it's the sentiment that counts!

The last, but not least, are things you should be doing post-event. In case you haven't noticed, you are being stalked. Clients that are thinking about booking your services don't just stumble across your site and book you. They are coming to you many times via sites like Wedding Wire and The Knot. Therefore, you need to work on getting more reviews on those sites. There are many ways to ask your past clients for them: hand-written notes, an automated email, or a personalized email. The bottom line is that if you know you rocked a show, then you need to get that review. To me, it's more valuable than a tip.

Pay. Make sure that if you are multi-op you pay your guys immediately following a gig. NEVER bounce their checks, and pay them well. The success of your company is reliant upon your awesome DJs.

Get social. Work on your social media game. Whenever I talk about social media, I tell folks you don't have to be great at all of the different channels, but at least pick one and be really good at it. Think about all of the amazing events and things we see as pro DJs. That stuff is Instagram (or Facebook or Twitter) gold! Post it! Let people know where it was and brag about how you crushed it!

I know this is a lot to take in, but let's face it, running your own business is tough. If it was easy, everyone would be doing it. Work hard this summer and I can assure you, it will pay off by the end of 2015! **MB**

SUMMER REFRESHER



Weekday Wealth: Corporate Opportunities

By Rob Peters and Keith Alan

Let's build some weekday wealth this month by chatting about some unique corporate event opportunities. Corporate events are more than just an annual holiday party around the December holiday season. Companies are beginning to look for unique ways to show appreciation for their employees. With the right services and good marketing, you can land some of these opportunities.

WHAT KIND OF WEEKDAY CORPORATE EVENTS ARE THERE FOR DJS?

Corporate events can vary because of a variety of factors, including the regional market, budget, company culture, and size of the company, just to name a few. Weekday corporate events can include:

Sound reinforcement for meetings: Renting your DJ gear and microphones for a business meeting, presentation, or seminar. (You can even turn this into a more profitable opportu-

nity by offering to stay and be the "sound technician" throughout the event.

Company picnics: Similar to the company holiday party, but usually held in the summer, these events usually take place during the workday and include fun music, games and activities.

Teambuilding: You can use a lot of those games or your game show system to help create a stronger company team with teambuilding games and activities. Or use your karaoke to develop a *Name That Tune* singing challenge or an *Idol* type of teambuilding competition where employees have to work together to perform a song in front of "judges" (other management team members or co-workers)

Employee appreciation events: From quarterly award lunches and dinners to regional meetings for employees, you can book these types of events to DJ or add some fun with teambuilding, karaoke or game shows.

These opportunities go beyond companies as well. There are chambers of commerce, trade associations, conventions and endless opportunities available. The key is to find them and work with your potential corporate client to gain their business.



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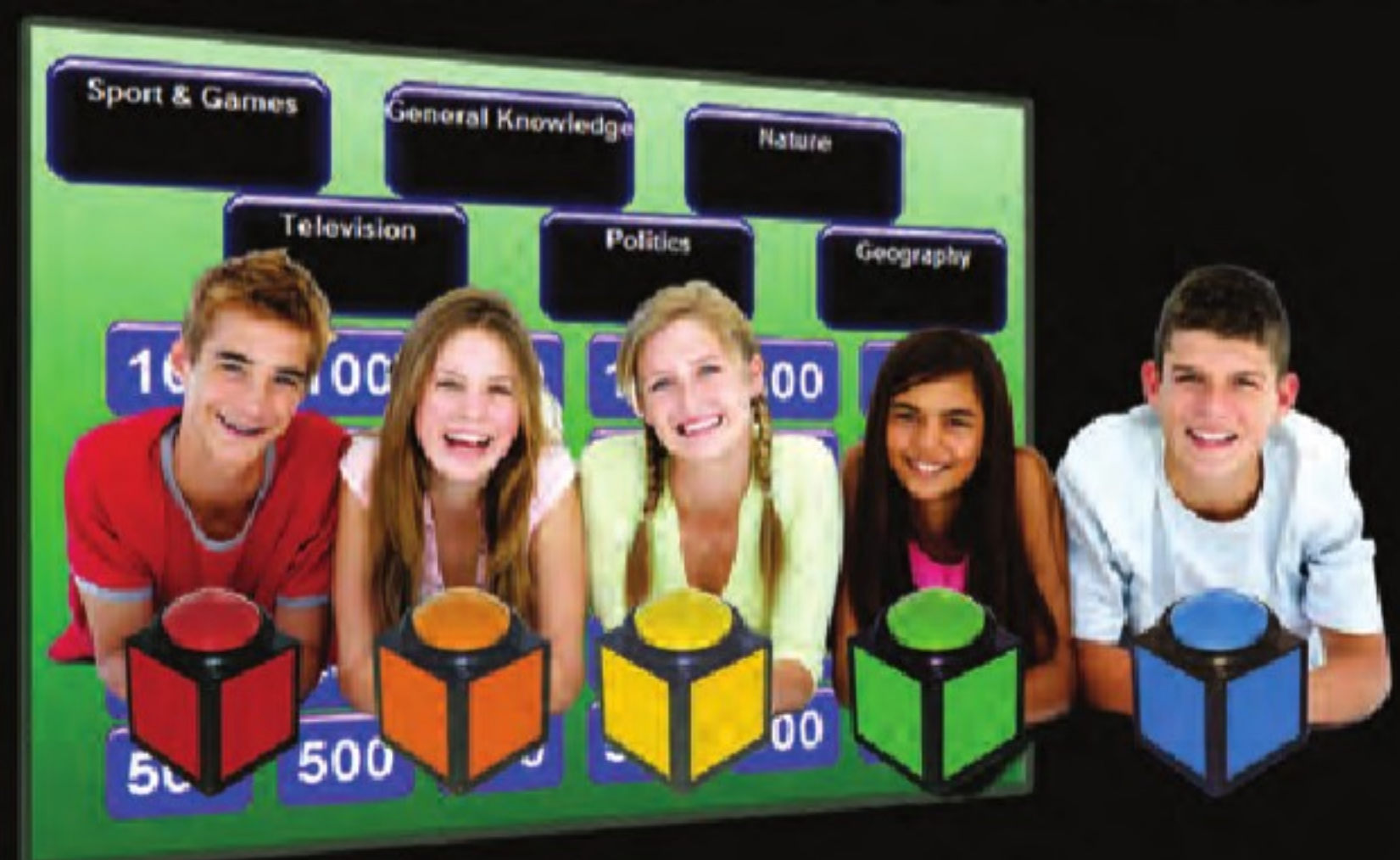
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THE WEEKDAY GAME

WHERE CAN I FIND THESE TYPES OF OPPORTUNITIES?

Getting started can be easier than you think. Remember the old saying "It's not what you know, it's who you know"? That's true. Use your current network of clients and colleagues to find out if their employer does appreciation or teambuilding events, and see if you can seek out a contact person who you can reach out to about finding out more. Sometimes, your connection with an employee they know can be your "foot in the door," especially if your connection is recommending your services.

Do you work with or have any connections with event planners or function facilities who refer or use your services? Plan a face to face meeting with them to introduce some of your other services to them. Sometimes, giving those people you work with a reminder about what you can do can help open doors for new opportunities.

Most chambers of commerce have networking events that you can attend. These events usually have an admission fee for non-members, but there you will find chamber members whose businesses may be planning events that can bring in new business opportunities for you. Think of your chamber of commerce networking event like exhibiting at a bridal show: at a bridal show, you are exhibiting to promote your services to a room full of qualified brides who may need your services. Chamber of commerce networking events can do the same thing, but for your corporate event business. You will be in a room of fellow business people. And don't count ANYONE out; these are also people who may plan events for other aspects of their lives. And you never know who may need your services.

Check out networking groups in your area. Business Networking International (BNI) is one of the most well known and structured networking groups in the country. I also highly recommend searching the internet for other net-



working groups or events in your area. Depending on your market, you may be surprised to find out how many different networking opportunities exist near you.

HOW SHOULD I MARKET MY SERVICES?

Marketing these services can be done in a variety of ways, including your website, postcards and even brochures. You will be surprised how many companies still want something tangible to look at when they are looking for these services. Be sure to include any testimonials for other corporate events you have provided services for.

If you are offering services such as game shows or teambuilding, show off the fun, but provide information about how you can tailor these services to fit specific company cultures, locations, and information. Some companies are strictly looking to break up the serious nature of their events with FUN. Others are having you come out to be part of training. In either case, be ready to learn about their event needs and come up with solutions that will satisfy and wow your prospective client.

Blogging can also be a great way to showcase your corporate entertainment services. Writing a blog that includes a spotlight article about a corporate event you have done can help promote your services by giving your prospective client an idea of what you are able to offer them. Take pictures and show how much fun the

attendees are having.

THEY CALLED—NOW WHAT?

If you really want to land these types of events, be prepared to do some extra work to secure the event. In most cases, any calls you receive for these events are from someone who is usually part of "the event planning committee," or something similar. Be ready to follow up on a phone call or an email with a detailed proposal of what you will be offering for their event. You might even offer to come in and meet with the committee to present your proposal and answer any questions they may have.

Following your presentation, you should follow up and inquire from the committee about a timeline on when you should hear back about their event. Once you book their services, crank it up to 110% and give them a performance that will have them calling you back for their next event.

One last thing: Remember when I said to ask your current and previous clients about these opportunities? Remember that during your performance, there are probably people in attendance who may be planning events that need your services. Give THEM a reason to come up and ask for a card! **MB**



Keith Alan has been in the DJ biz since 1975, started hosting weddings in 1982 and went full-time in 1993. While hosting over 60 weddings a year on the weekends, his mid-week programs generate income through out the year. Outside of the weddings division of Keith Alan Productions, Keith's summer program, Campardy™ has grown from 1 event in 2000, to 75 events within a 6 week window! He is busy with game shows, trivia, photo booths and extreme bingo the other 46 weeks of the year.



*For over 25 years, Rob Peters has been entertaining audiences of all ages, at weddings, corporate events, kids' parties and more. Rob started DJing in 1987 and went full time in 1998. He began doing kids' events in 2006, and now performs for over 100 weekday parties each summer. He is the co-owner of Rob Peters Entertainment in Braintree, MA, and runs Bubble Parties, a business program that helps DJs increase their youth event revenue. He is also a seminar presenter and author of *The Business Of Mobile DJing* from ProDJ Publishing.*



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DJ STYLE AT ANY AGE

By DJ Staci Nichols

“Cool DJs are cool.”

Ceremony Magazine: San Diego (from CBS Lifestylist, pg. 52, June/July 2015 edition)

Are you a cool DJ? Has being cool become more of a challenge as you've gotten older? Is style even on your radar? Let's just say there is a reason Marcello in his Italian suit made it onto MBLV15's "History of the Mobile DJ" slideshow—because it is important.

I know I'm not the only "under 40" DJ who has experienced these type of things:

I was at a bridal show over a year ago in which I suggested a young couple be sure to speak to the other show DJ before leaving. They told me, "Nahhhh, he looks kinda old." And he did. While he was only in his 50s, the real turn-off was his yucky 1980s tuxedo with a cummerbund.





Above: a promo photo shoot Dave and I did for Stagecoach. The photographer told us to do "duck faces." Dave said, "Yeah, I don't 'duck face.'" While he knew the term, he also knew it would have been over-the-top for him.



Dave's famous selfie of us at Stagecoach. It also appeared in the Desert Sun newspaper on April 25, 2015 ("How to Do the Stagecoach Shuffle," by Rosalie Murphy, www.desertsun.com/story/life/entertainment/music/stagecoach/2015/04/25/stagecoach-shuffle-honkytonk-2015/26350381/).

I had a client at my desk telling me they really wanted a female DJ for their wedding. I have the business cards of two other area female DJs on my desk. I said, "I'm not the only one in the area. Have you also talked to these ladies?" They turned up their noses and said they'd actually seen one of them at a fundraiser they attended the week before and, while she was also just in her 50s, the real turn-off was her yucky 1980s vest.

An accomplished DJ once reached out to me on an online forum in which brides were complaining about DJ prices, and we defended ourselves. After looking at my website, he told me how lucky I was to be young. He said despite all his awards, conferences, and training, brides simply did not see him as cool any more, sales were down, and he was re-thinking his career. I took a look at his website and, no surprise, it looked like it hadn't been updated in a decade and was fairly out of touch with today's engaged couples—it was the online equivalent of a cumberbund.

Was the real issue how old these DJs were? I don't think so. Now, I'm not saying getting older isn't an uphill battle we will all fight, but we shouldn't be blaming "loss of coolness" on aging, if the real problem is simply loss of coolness. Wrinkles aren't the issue; attitude is.

MEET MY DJ HERO, DAVE BYRD

In all my years honky tonkin' at the world famous Brandin' Iron Saloon in San Bernardino, CA, I was always one-part dancing and having fun and one-part studying the resident DJ, Dave Byrd. Dave greatly influenced my career as a DJ, unknowingly teaching me how to be a great host and interact with a crowd. A few years ago, I was lucky enough to be asked to fill in for him when he was on vacation, and I later invited him to join me in DJing at the world's largest country music festival, Stagecoach.

I'm in my mid-30s. Dave is in his early 60s. But, at Stagecoach



An excellent example of staying relevant! Liz Daley (Liz Daley Events, Williamsburg, VA, www.lizdaleyevents.com) hasn't dyed her hair pink or bought a sports car. She is authentic, relevant, and 100% Liz. Seriously, I want to rewind time and have that cool yet classy lady DJ my wedding! Thanks to another DJ hero, Liz Daley, for sharing this with us.

The Style File

- Is your go-to DJing outfit more than 2-3 years old? If so, dump it. (Same goes for your website and business card.)
- How long have you had the same hair-do? It may be time for a fresher, more modern look.
- Growing a goatee or shaving a moustache can do wonders. Don't be afraid to experiment!
- Get to the gym. Nothing says, "I've let myself go" like, well, letting yourself go.
- Remember when Mark Ferrell talked about wearing an Oscar de la Renta tux in "Getting What Your Worth?" Splurge on a \$75 hair cut or a spray tan or Italian shoes. When you invest in yourself, clients will invest in you.
- Need more inspiration? Go to ScratchWeddings.com and look through their roster of DJs. There's a reason why photos are required to apply for a wedding DJ job with America's coolest wedding DJ company.
- YOU are your brand. So if you are tired, crotchety, flabby, dusty, and out-of-touch, so is your brand. Remember clients don't care what you tell them, they care what you show them.

last month, he was the one telling the 1,800 kids on our dance floor to gather in for a giant group selfie that he posted at #StagecoachHonkyTonk. The first thing you notice about Dave is that all of his regular patrons love him. They come up to the DJ booth demanding a hug, happy to see him. Hmm....how is

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this guy with a daughter about my age so popular with these 20-somethings?

THE SECRET RECIPE TO DJ COOLNESS

I picked Dave's brain about how he managed to succeed at something in which so many DJs are failing. Dave says that staying relevant has been a priority throughout his career—not necessarily being “young” or “cool.” He stays on top of trends (this is so much more than new music, folks, it's knowing how to Instagram, it's listening to the same radio morning show that your clients are, it's comfortably using terms like “btw”). He says he's constantly aware of how his audience sees him...so no “Dad jeans,” but also no skinny jeans. Dave says, “I know that if I buy that brown Lincoln Town Car with the AAA window sticker and ‘ask me about my grandkids’ hanging sign, I just won't get the props I need from my younger peeps, so it's a middle-of-the road Camry for me now.”

STAYING COOL DOESN'T JUST HAPPEN

Come on, Michael Jackson was the coolest guy any of us ever came across...but even his early awesomeness didn't guarantee him relevancy as he aged. Instead of fighting an uphill battle, have an exit strategy. *Seinfeld* or *Sex and the City* could still easily be on the air right now, but the talent walked away while they were still relevant instead of waiting to crash and burn. Relevancy is a commodity—we work on our mixes, our MCing, study new gear, but do we ignore the very thing holding it all together? If



DJ and Officiant Staci Nichols owns Revolution Weddings and Country Wedding DJ in San Diego. Her wedding know-how has appeared on *Wed Loft*, *Offbeat Bride*, *Wedding Planner Magazine* and others. She has a B.A. from the University of Redlands' Johnston Center for Integrative Studies in Sociology. Even though you might catch her hosting the Stagecoach Festival's Honky Tonk or DJing at a local club, she's a wedding junkie through and through.

your mixes, MCing, or gear aren't—first and foremost—relevant, they're no good. In the world of DJing, the messenger is as important as the message.

So while it's entirely possible to extend your DJ shelf life, it's also prudent to take a bow before you reach that expiration date. What is Dave's exit strategy? He plans to do voice-over work full-time (he's crazy talented, find him at VoiceTalentPro.com). Personally, I started my retirement plan in March when I opened my own bridal boutique.

Final wisdom from the age-defying resident DJ at one of southern California's most popular hotspots, “I've noticed some of the other older DJs in the area are kind of stuck representing a bygone era when it comes to style and relevance, but I've always believed that, if you're not moving forward, you're falling behind.” **MB**

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Songs for Summer Fun

MAKING THE WARM WEATHER EVENTS ROCK

By Jay Maxwell

School's out, the pool is open, and it is time for the summer fun to begin. Every school age child counts down the last days of school in anticipation of the freedom that summer brings. Perhaps there are the thoughts of family vacations, trips to the beach, playing in the pool or water park, or just chilling with friends on many lazy summer days. Summertime for a child means no homework or getting up early to catch the bus. Even when we are adults, the arrival of summer brings back fond memories of our childhood when we played baseball with our friends or went to the summer blockbuster movie. For mobile DJs, the rise in temperature for the summer months means more than just summer weddings, it also gives us the opportunity to share a little music at pool parties, summer gatherings, and corporate picnics.

We will talk about the music for the summer events, but first, a few reminders about safety. We all know that water and electricity do not mix. However, let me remind you to have safety first in mind when you are setting up for a pool party. Remember to place the equipment as far from the water as possible so that it does not get wet. The last thing you want is for somebody's cannonball dive into the pool to splash onto your equipment. Ensure that when you plug the cord into the socket, that it is not near water. Though it is always important to keep all cords tucked away to avoid anyone tripping on them, it is especially important at a pool since the person would land on hard concrete if they were to fall. Another safety reminder is to keep yourself and the equipment in the shade if at all possible. This will prevent the equipment from overheating and will assist in keeping you cool enough to avoid

any heat related issues such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

There is usually not much extra planning involved in a pool party or company picnic as compared to a wedding reception. Another bonus feature is that these events are usually in the daytime and may allow you to do more than one event in a day. Often these events are during the week, which is even sweeter since most of the events DJs perform are on the weekend. With these factors in mind, the price typically charged for pool parties or corporate picnics is not near as high as the typical fee for wedding receptions.

Because these events are usually relatively stress-free, it is also a great idea to place your newest DJ on these events to give him the practice he needs to increase his confidence for the more involved events. Of course, like any event, these

may be more involved than expected. Always inquire from the client exactly her expectations in order to plan accordingly. Though the requirement may be to play summertime, upbeat music (see this issue's list), there may be more that is expected such as helping with any games that may be played at the event.

If there will be games played, make sure that either the client brings the necessary equipment or that you pack the supplies yourself. For example, if you are going to

play Diving for Gold you will want to empty your piggy bank of its pennies the night before the event. For this game, you will have all the participants line up on the edge of the pool before you throw your pennies into the pool. The swimmers will then dive for the gold (your pennies) and stack them into individual piles on the side of the pool. Give them a time limit, say ten minutes, and then determine the winner by who has collected the most pennies. The Noodle Joust is another fun water game where two players sit on a float in the middle of the pool and using pool noodles attempt to dislodge each other from the raft. The winner of each round gets a new challenger.

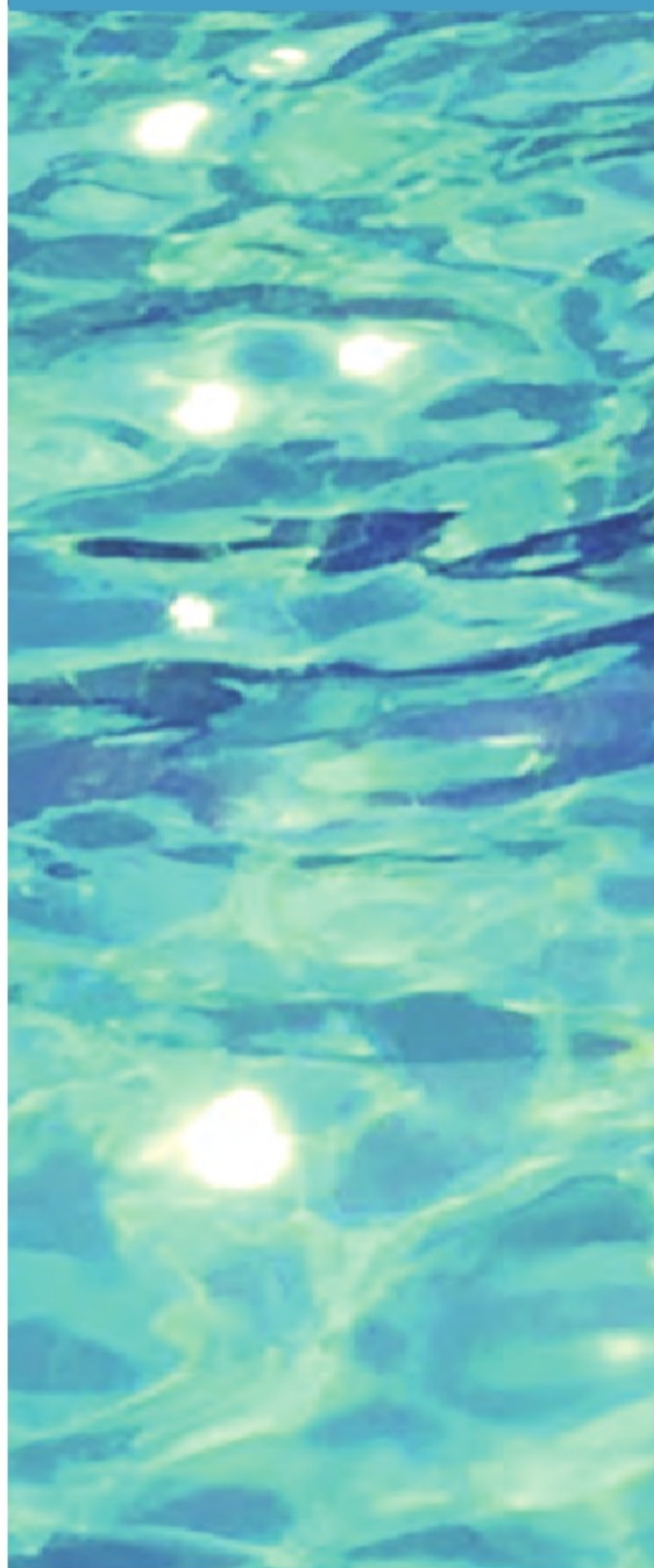
It still amazes me how many times someone will come up to the DJ booth and ask me to play a song that everyone wants to hear. Whenever someone finally writes and records that song, I will be delighted to play it. Meanwhile, my response is that I typically give the person a wink and hardy handshake and ask them what they would like to hear. The songs to play at these events need to be fun, upbeat songs that have "family-friendly" lyrics that will enhance the afternoon's event in the sun. Keep in mind that if the ages of the guests are younger, they will want you to stick with hits that are more current. However, the songs on this list are excellent to begin the show and mix throughout the day. You cannot go wrong with the California surfing sounds

It still amazes me how many times someone will come up to the DJ booth and ask me to play a song that everyone wants to hear.



Mobile Beat's resident musicologist since 1992 (issue #11), Jay Maxwell runs the multi-talent entertainment company, Jay Maxwell's Music by Request, LLC, in Charleston, South Carolina. He is also a professor of Business at Charleston Southern University. His passion for detail and continuous research of clients' requests can be found not only in this column, but also in his annually updated music guide, *Play Something We Can Dance To*.

SUMMER FUN SOUNDTRACK



of the Beach Boys, the island feel of Bob Marley, or the carefree toes-in-the-sand music of Jimmy Buffett at a summertime event. There will be no need for any slow songs during the show. The music from this list should keep the party hopping and have you making a bigger splash than the dude doing cannonballs off the high dive. Remember that a mobile DJ's job is to enhance the event with his music, DJ skills, and ability to interact with the crowd. Moreover, it is possible for people to have a fantastic time at an event, even if no one asks you to play something we can dance to! **MB**

	SONG TITLE	ARTIST
1	SURFIN' SAFARI	BEACH BOYS
2	SURF CITY	JAN & DEAN
3	WALKING ON SUNSHINE	KATRINA & THE WAVES
4	HOT HOT HOT	BUSTER POINDEXTER
5	MARGARITAVILLE	JIMMY BUFFETT
6	HOT FUN IN THE SUMMERTIME	SLY & THE FAMILY STONE
7	GOOD DAY SUNSHINE	BEATLES
8	ALL SUMMER LONG	KID ROCK
9	THE TIDE IS HIGH	BLONDIE
10	SOAK UP THE SUN	SHERYL CROW
11	SURFIN' USA	BEACH BOYS
12	(LOVE IS LIKE A) HEAT WAVE	MARTHA REEVES & THE VANDELLAS
13	SUMMER IN THE CITY	LOVIN' SPOONFUL
14	SUMMER NIGHTS	OLIVIA NEWTON-JOHN & JOHN TRAVOLTA
15	CALIFORNIA GIRLS	DAVID LEE ROTH
16	BRIGHTER THAN THE SUN	COLBIE CAILLAT
17	IN THE SUMMERTIME	MUNGO JERRY
18	RED RED WINE	UB40
19	ISLAND IN THE SUN	WEEZER
20	CHEESEBURGER IN PARADISE	JIMMY BUFFETT
21	TOES	ZAC BROWN BAND
22	GOOD VIBRATIONS	BEACH BOYS
23	SUMMERTIME	DJ JAZZY JEFF & FRESH PRINCE
24	GIRLS JUST WANT TO HAVE FUN	CYNDI LAUPER
25	MONTEGO BAY	BOBBY BLOOM
26	PRETTY WOMAN	ROY ORBISON
27	SATURDAY IN THE PARK	CHICAGO
28	JAMMING	BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS
29	UNDER THE BOARDWALK	DRIFTERS
30	SUMMERTIME BLUES	EDDIE COCHRAN
31	HAPPY	PHARRELL WILLIAMS
32	HAWAII FIVE-O	VENTURES
33	BEACH BABY	FIRST CLASS
34	IT'S FIVE O'CLOCK SOMEWHERE	ALAN JACKSON & JIMMY BUFFETT
35	SUMMERTIME'S CALLING ME	GENERAL JOHNSON
36	HOOKED ON A FEELING	BLUE SWEDE
37	KOKOMO	BEACH BOYS
38	ROCK LOBSTER	B-52'S
39	DON'T WORRY, BE HAPPY	BOBBY MCFERRIN
40	SUMMERTIME	KENNY CHESNEY
41	THE SOUND OF SUNSHINE	MICHAEL FRANTI & SPEARHEAD
42	DANCING IN THE STREET	MARTHA REEVES & THE VANDELLAS
43	STIR IT UP	JOHNNY NASH
44	I LIKE TO MOVE IT	WILL.I.AM
45	WONDERFUL WORLD, BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE	JIMMY CLIFF
46	FINS	JIMMY BUFFETT
47	SWEAT (A LA LA LA LA SONG)	INNER CIRCLE
48	THREE LITTLE BIRDS	BOB MARLEY & THE WAILERS
49	LA BAMBA	LOS LOBOS
50	WIPEOUT	SURFARIS

Who Are You?

TIME TO STOP AND PONDER

By Mike Ficher

Who are you?

No, we're not talking about the final Jeopardy answer to "Originally, the title track from a 1978 album, this song is now the theme for a long-running CBS drama."

Who are you?

No, we're not talking about a philosophical prompt to determine your standing in the larger collage of life on a planet of 7.2 billion people.

Who are you?

No, we're not talking about a question you should ask when playing an improvisation game.

Who are you?

Summer, a time of renewal and refreshment, offers you a chance to think about that question, as it really relates to YOU—and the response could go a long way toward how you view yourself and your event audiences.

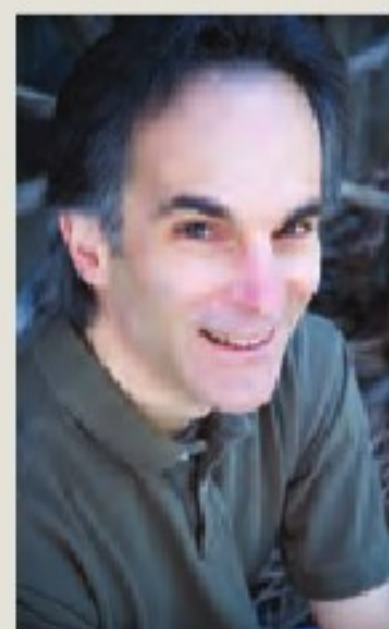
HIGH NOON

The popularity in the UK and the US of their respective incarnations of *Whose Line Is It Anyway?* has spawned the perception that the wacky world of improvisation is the Wild West of the entertainment wonderland. However, several key parameters increase the likelihood that players—including Wayne, Colin and Ryan—will create engaging and entertaining bits for the audience.

"Improv principles are very relevant to business," notes Renie McClay, president of Sales and Marketing Training and an improv comedy teacher for No Foam Productions in the Chicago area. "The goal of every improviser is to make the team look good. Period. When that happens, the performance works and the audience is pleased."

SAY ANYTHING

The foundation of successful improvisation is "Yes, and..." Simply, you agree with the other person or people and their ideas in a scene and add along the same thread. Conflict is actively avoided and teamwork is crucial to the success of the scene. Denying, ignoring or canceling



*A business analyst by day, Mike Ficher is an actor, voice artist, MC, sportscaster, public address announcer and former mobile entertainer. He is also the host of the weekly syndicated radio program, **The Ultimate Oldies Show**. Mike synthesizes these varied experiences to illuminate historic connectivity and fresh perspectives on the mobile entertainment profession. More info at www.mikeficher.com.*

another player's idea can effectively render a scene rudderless or incoherent, and likely confusing or distracting the audience. Listening, observing and being in the moment are paramount to a thriving, compelling scene.

Another key element of successful improvisation encompasses active listening. Whether performing at a gig or playing in an improvisation bit, if you are listening, you can appropriately—and, hopefully, with gusto—add to the scene. If you are not, well, the potential for a scene straight out of the long-running stage farce *Dazed and Confused* is significantly increased. Opportunities to elevate a scene and create memorable moments at a gig or on stage start with critical listening.

And, finally—for this article—one of the critical adjuncts of enjoyable, pleasing improvisation for not only the audience, but the players, is making strong character choices. In other words, who are you?

ONLY MUSIC FOR YOU!

In the infancy of the mobile DJ industry, providing music on site was the novelty, the primary selling point. Thus, the birth of the mobile disc jockey. Now in the world of iPods, smart phones, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, and Facebook, broad-based, interactive skills, cutting-edge technology and reflective video have become more the norm. Thus, the evolution to the mobile entertainer. And, maybe, the next evolution, the mobile producer.

At one event, an entertainer can be a music programmer. At another, a game show host. Or perhaps, a hybrid programmer/dance instructor. Maybe, a raffle maven. Tomorrow, an adept emcee. Or, a comic. Or a video impresario. More likely, an entertainer is called to some combina-

Are you the polished yet accessible emcee, with a good word and a quick smile?

tion of all of the above and beyond at any one event.

PLACES, PEOPLE!

Each role, much like being in a theatrical production, a movie or a television commercial, involves choice. What is the character's motivation? What are the relationships to the other characters? What are the character's attributes? What are the objects of the scene? What is the character's point of view? How is the character feeling at the moment?

With an increasing number of events requiring multiple roles for the entertainer, and as Scott Faver, the Game Master, noted in a classic Mobile Beat article, "More and more clients are looking for a TV show or a movie for their celebrations, where the client and the guests are the stars of that movie," the choices that entertainers make regarding their role(s) may

play a more critical factor in the success of the event.

WHO ARE YOU?

Are you the overbearing, narcissistic game show host, who never met an unflattering camera or unengaged audience? Or are you the friendly, supportive, generous game show host, who has stable relationships and longtime friends?

Are you the inspiring So You Think You Can Dance guide, marveling at the talents of the performers? Or are you the bemused, moderately suave, always composed Dancing With the Stars muse?

Are you the distant yet musically connected club DJ, emerging from the basement of the day to spin rich palettes of colorful mixes for the dancers of the night?

Are you the polished yet accessible emcee, with a good word and a quick

smile for your staff and the audience? Are you the director auteur, adeptly working behind the scenes to create a creative, emotionally moving mix of audio, video and memories?

VOICE YOUR CHOICE

In every improvisation game or form, players quickly render choices on character, motivation, attitude, relationships and more, occasionally, with prodding from other players in the scene, but all without direction.

When you serve at your next event, while the room is relatively quiet, while you are efficiently loading in your gear to perform, ask yourself the question: Who are you? Make a great choice and, more critically, commit to that choice fully—and you might be surprised how the answer might impact your performance that evening! **MB**



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Photo Booth Innovation

APPLE INDUSTRIES' FACE PLACE PROVIDES A POWERFUL PHOTO EXPERIENCE

By Mobile Beat Staff

Apple Industries, has been part of the amusement industry for 30+ years. But to stay on the cutting edge of entertainment, it acquired Face Place (www.faceplacephoto.com) which was part of the modern day photo booth comeback.

The first commercially successful automatic photographic booth was the "Bosco" and was patented back in 1890, but what we all picture as a photobooth wasn't around until 1925. That was the year Anatol Josepho put his unit on Broadway in New York City, according to Wikipedia. For "25 cents, the booth took, developed and printed 8 photos, a process taking roughly ten minutes. In the first six months after the booth was erected it was used by 280,000 people."

Over the next 75 years or so, photo booths developed and innovated but it was not until the last twenty years or so that the industry has had its modern day comeback. The photo booth of today can do the same thing that it did back then with much better quality and more speed, but also can do a lot more. That's where the photo booth market is driving things with new

technology such as green screens, social media uploads, audio and video recordings, and more.

We asked Scott Avery, the COO of Apple Industries, his company got into the photo booth business.

"Apple Industries is a company that's actually been in business for decades. It's seen its roots in the amusement industry, which I think a lot of people out there under-

ever created with the Face Place Photo to Go.

"So we've been around for a really long time. We understand the photo booth business; we created it. And we



continue on a daily basis to develop new software and to improve our products for the event business and the DJs that are out there operating our equipment as well as new things that might be on the horizon that people will want to be using 10 years or 20 years from now."

"We actually acquired Face Place, which was the company that manufactured and patented the Photo to Go



stand and know. But one of the things that they don't know is Apple Industries and the Face Place brand of photo booths was actually one of the first portable event photo booths

in 2008. So that product's actually been around for over a decade. Really, what we saw at that point was we were doing a small portion of our business in the amusement marketplace. But really what was driving our business to grow was the event business as it started here in New York, which is where our headquarters is. It really started to expand and many people were demanding photo booths for their weddings, bar mitzvahs, birthday parties and corporate events.



So we kind of took the Photo to Go, as well as our Sapphire and Royale models and really made them kind of a common product in these venues through some of our good customers here. Obviously, we've got really big DJ companies and event companies here in New York metro area. So most of them, most of the very large DJs and event companies throughout the country are familiar with the Apple Industries product, the Face Place brand and have been using our products in events for over a decade now."

We asked about their latest offerings, including Photo Studio, which was featured at the last Night Club and Bar Show. It goes way beyond just pictures on photo strip.

Scott said, "We looked at a lot of stuff that's kind of come into the marketplace over the last five years, and with the Photo Studio what we did is we took everything we thought worked well within all those products that were out there, and we brought it into one product. It's still a new product so it's still in its infancy. But we want it to be portable and I think you'll find that it's very lightweight. I mean, the base unit weighs—with the printer out—less than 100 pounds. It's made out of aluminum. So it's very lightweight and portable. And as far as the technology is concerned, we know how much everyone loves green screen, but let's be honest, it's an eyesore for an event. Nobody wants this big green background.

"So we invested in some very new state-of-the-art technology where we do green screen without the need for a big green ugly screen. It's a silver—it looks clean. It actually fits into some of the décor in a lot of events. And most people don't even know. They walk by and they see this big silver screen in the background, but then they look at what's happening on the interface and it's actually green screen behind it. I mean, they are blown away by how exciting and interactive it becomes...That's one of the key features in the product."

At that same event where we saw the Photo Studio, Jon Taffer was talking in a seminar about experience and that the bars are all about "an experience." Scott tied this into the Photo Studio.

"...The photo booth has evolved since we've been in the photo booth business from click and shoot, even though you have a lot of people out there that still want a classic photo booth experience to go in and get the photo strips and just walk away and put a couple into an album.

"But then you have the people now, as the generations kind of grow older, they want something different in their photo booth experience. That's why the

Photo Studio was created. We saw the need for an open-air, kiosk-style photo booth, which obviously was getting some attention in the market. So we thought, hey, let's go out and make the best one that's out there at a really affordable price and see if we can't sort of take over.

"The product is interactive. We do use different experiences that we've included. I think now we're up to 22 experiences, and we plan to add another six to eight, to bring us up to 30 different experiences within the product, where you can go and actually you're interacting with the screen in front of you and it's encouraging you to have fun, not just stand there and point and shoot with it, as you said.

"And it's really fun. You watch people go in and take their picture, and it encourages you to smile, it encourages you to do something goofy. It's not just stand there and you figure out what to do. It's telling you what to do. So that's where it differentiates itself from other things that are out there. And we're really excited about where it is today and where it's going to be ten years from now." **MB**



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The Experience Is All Bose

THE NEW F1
ROLLOUT

By Ryan Burger



Recently, for the press debut of the new Bose F1 Loudspeaker system, I had an opportunity to visit the company's famous headquarters at "The Mountain" in Framingham, Massachusetts. I was totally immersed in everything Bose for a full day. After getting a tour and finding out about the rich history of Bose and how they have constantly worked to make everything sound better, I was shown the new Bose F1 Flexible Array Loudspeaker system we will talk about later.

Bose was started in 1964 by Dr. Amar G. Bose, then a professor of electrical engineering at MIT, and has since grown into a 3 billion dollar corporation with over 10,000 employees. Dr. Bose saw a need for better sounding headphones and much of the development that Bose has done over the years has been driven by similar circumstances. This company has never been a me-too type of manufacturer/developer. While some companies will take a product and rework it using technology someone else has developed and then call it their own, Bose has a philosophy of not releasing a product that doesn't contain a new technology developed by Bose engineers. From the people I met there, they appear to be a very cool mix of engineers, musicians and marketers.

Known for its amazing radios, surround sound speakers, noise canceling headphones and more, Bose pushed into the DJ industry initially with their 901 speakers, which are still used by some DJ companies to this day. But the modern history of DJs and Bose really kicked off when the L1 "Stick" Portable systems were introduced to the market in 2003 and

2004. These systems continued to innovate, with the B2 bass subwoofer added as an extension, and the L1 systems are still very popular with DJs looking for an elegant wedding DJ sound system with a minimal visual footprint.

In great discussions with the director of Global Sales and Marketing Fuat Kuro, Craig Jackson the product line manager, Kyle Sullivan in marketing, Chris Lentz in sales and many others, I felt the vibe of genuine interest in what DJs want and need and how Bose can fill those needs. Much of what they have learned from DJs is expressed in the product they were to show me later in the day, the F1 system.

Bose continues to innovate and has always followed the guiding principles that Dr. Bose set in motion many years before his death in 2013:

- Innovation and technology that deliver demonstrable benefits to consumers.
- Teamwork and collaboration that inspire the best people to stay and others to join.
- Growth to reach more customers with the benefits of Bose technology and to provide opportunity for employees
- Financial viability of the business to self-fund research, innovation and growth over the long run.

ANOTHER INNOVATION FROM BOSE

Now, for the reason I went to The Mountain: the F1 Model 812, due out in August. After a press event to provide a look at the next generation of Bose loudspeaker, I was very impressed. While a full review will be coming later this summer from Mobile Beat's Michael Buonaccorso Jr., we will just cover the basics here.

Bose has been listening to its audiences, and wanted to build something that served the needs of small bands who roll with their own sound systems, and DJs needing something for 200-300 people that has a full range of sound. Since the L1 system debuted and became popular over 10 years ago, the powered loudspeaker offerings from all manufacturers have blossomed into a massive selection of options with quality speakers in many different price ranges.

The F1 system is made up of two components, the F1 Model 812 Loudspeaker, which retails \$1,199, and the F1 Subwoofer, which is also \$1,199. The two units provide the flexibility to mix and match and make the right system for your DJ applications.

Targeting the high end of our market, Bose has come in with a full sound system consisting of two F1 loudspeakers and two F1 subwoofers, together costing just under \$5,000. Alternatively just using a pair of F1 Model 812 units, you can do this for around \$2,500. Yes, comparing that with popular options from other companies put it as a premium cost, but when you look at the total numbers of doing it right, you are only talking about \$1,000 to \$1,500 more to do it with Bose style and Bose sound. The tools you are using to work your gigs are as essential to your skills at music, MC work and similar; a great entertainer can't be heard well unless they have the right tools to do their job, and this Bose option offers a high-quality option for achieving the goal of great sound.

During the demo I was able to see them set up in a live band setting where they turned off their massive ceiling-mounted line arrays with side-fills (probably valued at \$75k or more) and simply used the dual F1 loudspeaker / dual F1 subwoofer configuration. Additionally they had a DJ work a separate set of F1 Model 812 and F1 subs that he plugged directly into from his DJ mixer (with no processing or anything) and had him doing sets in between the band. The sound out of both systems was fantastic, filling the room with plenty of good vibrations.

One of the unique features of the F1 Model 812 Loudspeaker is its flexible array. This technology allows you to control the vertical coverage of the loudspeaker. You can create four unique coverage patterns simply by pushing or pulling the array into the appropriate position. The "straight" position gives you tight vertical control, great for an application when the performers and the audience are on the same physical plane. The "J" position allows you to send sound down but not up. This works well if the PA is placed on an elevated stage and you have to get sound down to an audience. The "Reverse J" position sends sound up but not down. Perfect for bleachers in a gymnasium. And finally there is a "C" position. This provides the most liberal vertical coverage pattern, sending sound both up and down. And, whenever the array is set to a new position, the DSP automatically updates the loudspeaker EQ to maintain the proper tonal balance.

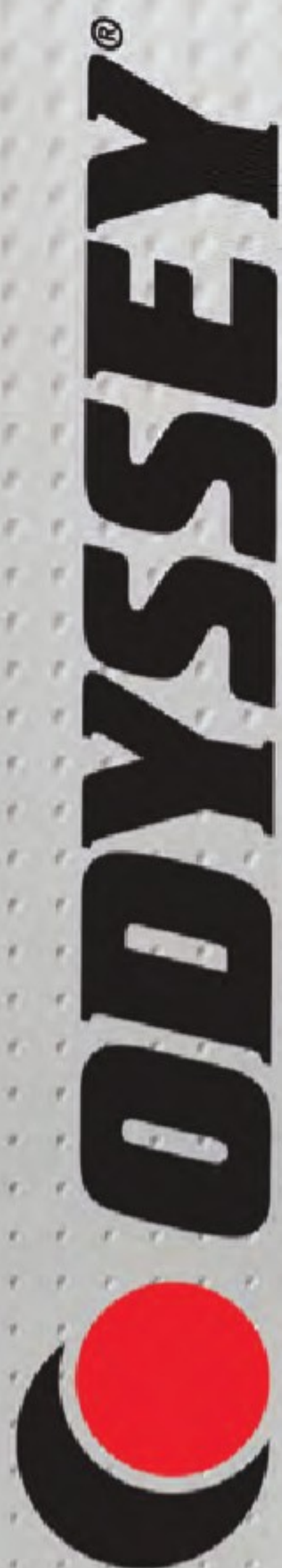




The F1 Model 812 consists of eight drivers in the mid/high line array and a 12" low driver. On the back side of the F1 there is a two channel mixer. For the F1 Subwoofer, to economize space, they have matched up two 10" drivers that give you the performance of a much larger bass box. Both the sub and full range are powered with 1000-watt amplifiers. The F1 subwoofer has a mounting bracket to hold the F1 Model 812 above itself in a uniquely stylish way. Once again, Bose has made a cool looking product that produces a great sound.

As with any system, especially a potentially major investment like this one, I highly recommend you get into a dealer to hear them yourself. Otherwise, come to Mobile Beat Las Vegas next March to hear them in person, if you aren't in an immediate need for the new hardware. More information can be found at Bose.Com/F1 and look for their availability in late summer 2015. **MB**





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Connecting Gear Makers & Users

SWEETWATER'S GEARFEST SERVES SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS ALIKE

By Ryan Burger

Summer is the time for family trips and being outside, and I was able to combine that with some business on a drive out to Fort Wayne, Indiana for a special day in June: GearFest at Sweetwater, one of the nation's largest dealers for musical equipment.

Starting in the recording studio arena and then moving into guitars, keyboards and more, Sweetwater has also made

including warehouse space, customer service department, educational class space, other offices, a food court, hairstylists, and—since it's the music industry after all—multiple stages for performance and studio work. And, of course, a huge retail store.

In its thirteenth year, this GearFest attracted over 10,000 participants, with attendance up over 25% over last year. As DJ Flip (djflipentertainment.com), who was demoing/representing Pioneer DJ, said, "It was my first time at GearFest and my first impression was that it reminded

me of a mini version of NAMM." Scott Noble of Peavey added to this vibe: "Gearfest has become such a destination event it is really incredible. Sweetwater has done an excellent job of getting their customers to come out to see what's new and to learn how to get the most out of their gear. For most of our customers this is the closest that they will ever get to an industry show. It is a chance for them to compare gear side by side and talk directly to the factory guys with the products available to demo and touch." Just like NAMM, the majority of the space was dedicated to musical instruments with entire tents dedicated to acoustic guitars, electric guitars, drums and more. There were over 400 manufacturers represented at GearFest!

Some of the larger manufacturers like Gibson had entire tents dedicated to their many lines of products. Gibson's sound reinforcement and DJ-oriented products lines like Cerwin-Vega! and Stanton were well represented at the event. DJ Spark (onedjspark.com) a Stanton demonstrator told us, "DJs that attend GearFest are always excited about more than just 'what's new'...It's the connection. Gearfest is the trade show where the more intimate relationships can be built. It is an ideal event for any DJ, regardless of status, to connect directly with the heads of marketing at all the top DJ equipment manufacturing companies in a comfortable, laid-back setting."



strides into the DJ gear marketplace in recent years. The company is also well known for its high level of customer service and dedication to education. Sweetwater.Com has over 63,000 pages of instructional videos, demos and technical documents for the music industry.

Sweetwater's signature event every year is GearFest, a two-day celebration of music tech, held on their campus in Fort Wayne, about 2-1/2 hours from Chicago or Detroit, in Northeast Indiana. It truly is a "campus"—it reminded me of pictures I've seen of the big Silicon Valley companies, have with one mega complex, in this case





While there wasn't quite as much DJ-oriented product on-hand, like you would see at Mobile Beat Las Vegas, most of the majors were well-represented, including Pioneer, Numark, Rane and Gibson (Stanton and Cerwin-Vega!), along with lighting biggies ADJ and Chauvet. Most of the DJ products were in an "Electronic Production" tent, while other manufacturers like Bose, Peavey and QSC showed their DJ gear in Pro Audio areas along with their larger contingents of non-DJ technology. GearFest is a great opportunity for manufacturers to reach end users directly. For example, Scott from Peavey's excitement about the reception of their Pvx12's was apparent: "When customers heard how good these boxes sound they were floored to find out how affordable they are!" And it's not just for the big companies, as our friends at GaffTech found, as they were also there showing off their innovative GaffGun that has been taking the industry by storm.

"At the Pioneer booth there were various walks of life from DJs to aspiring DJs to people who have never seen or touched a piece of DJ gear in their lives," said DJ Flip. "The biggest thing that caught a lot of attention was our DDJ-SX2 and the XDJ-1000 as well as our new XDJ-RX. They were impressed by the features and functionality of the units. From the comments and feedback that I've gotten, the DDJ-SX2 seemed to be the unit that brought consideration and inspiration to want to dive into the DJ realm."

Chauvet Lighting had a strong presence at the event, with Rob Joseph presenting a seminar on "Lighting Design on a Budget." One of the most popular lights at GearFest was the powerful Intimidator Spot 255 IRC, from the ever-popular Intimidator series. Bob Laino, Chauvet's

and president Chuck Surack. "I personally greeted thousands of our customers at the front door as they arrived and was astounded by the enthusiasm everyone seemed to have for Sweetwater, GearFest, and, in particular, for their interactions with our incredible employees. That, along with its continued growth in overall attendance and sales, has made GearFest a truly unique event in the music retail business.

I came away from the event really excited for the potential of it to become even more DJ-focused and hopefully turning the "Electronic Production" tent into a "Disc Jockey and Electronic Production tent." I was also encouraged to see a major business like this giving back to the music community with an event that truly opened its doors to everyone.

Summing up the whole scene, Mike May, National Sales Manager DJ & Retail



Regional Sales Manager, Northeast showed me with its super-bright 60-watt LED, cool new technology and optics. The totem mode, which keeps your beams always on the dance floor, is perfect mobile DJs.

Ted Molina of ADJ said, "As far as the event goes, it was the best turn out I have seen in the four years that I have been helping. [Sweetwater's] forte is in recording and sound but over the years I have seen our booth triple in size as well as adding lighting to the center stage. The people that go to this event never cease to amaze me in how they adapt so easily to the elements (ie. cloud bursts). Our hot items were the WIFLY QA5's, Inno Spot Elites, Inno Spot Pros, the HEX series, MYDMX 2.0 and more...In general, a lot of the people were hungry for knowledge of our product."

"This year's GearFest was one of the most exciting and humbling experiences of my career," said Sweetwater founder



Products for Rane Corporation, and veteran of hundreds of trade shows, had this to say about GearFest: "...what an event it is. A tremendous expo of the finest products in the music industry, supported by top educators and musicians. It is a must-see! Great deals on music products of all kinds, held at one of the finest retail locations you will ever see. If you are into music Sweetwater & GearFest are not to be missed." **MB**

A Life Time of Party Time

DJING SINCE THE DISCO ERA (WHEN HE WAS A BABY), RICK SYKES KEEPS BRINGING THE PARTY TO MUSIC CITY

By Ryan Burger



Each year at Mobile Beat Las Vegas, I get to meet up with three kinds of attendees: those I'm meeting for the first time, those I see every year and get to know a bit better at every event, and some I haven't seen in a long time.

At the last MBLV, Rick Sykes of Party Time Nashville fit into that third category. Although he runs a successful multi-op company, Rick is truly a "one-man machine" at the Party Time Nashville office. He has established Party Time as a leading entertainment entity in the "Music City" that is Nashville, Tennessee—which is saying something, considering how entertainment is part of the entire fabric of this unique metropolitan area.

"I've been in the business a long time, about 38 years now," says Rick. "I started in '76 when I was a mere 11 years old and kind of started partying a little bit—not real 'party' partying, but going to parties with a cousin of mine who was the first DJ I really ever met. My cousin Mickey played music at the parties and we actually took an old Altec Lansing Voice of the Theater sound system and a bunch of marquee lights out...and I thought it was really neat, loved music, and always enjoyed doing it. So I jumped on the bandwagon and started carrying albums around."

Rick continued reminiscing: "So I actually bought my first system that I owned then—I guess I kind of jumped ahead a little bit—but the actual first system



that I actually played on besides my cousin's was a stereo system (some of the old guys will remember Sansui), which was an old receiver with a couple of really, really nice speakers. And it actually had a microphone input.

"And I DJ'd my first eighth grade dance—I guess my only eighth grade dance—so that was my first official paying gig as a disc jockey, where I wasn't actually out working for somebody else, I was actually doing my own party for my own money."

Hitting fast-forward for few decades brought us to the topic of Rick's current systems, which number at ten. Besides deploying his own team, he has also built



strategic partnerships with other companies in Nashville, something he has found to be a good business move leading to growth. He summed it up well by saying "There's a lot of benefit in spreading the goodness of it around."

Rick continued: "We have a real good community here in Nashville where most of the people that we deal with, they're old school like me and their word is really their bond. It's like, 'Hey, I won't rent it without bringing you in and you don't rent it without bringing me in.' It's not trying to lock up the market, but it's like equal pleasure for equal pain. Both of us have invested that time, effort, and money into it and the one doesn't want to see the other one miss out just to make an extra few bucks."

ENTERTAINMENT INVESTMENT STRATEGY

While Party Time Nashville has seen constant expansion over recent years, it's not just in buying hardware and then finding a way to sell it to the clients. According to Rick, it's all about return on investment.

"For me, personally, it's return on investment. Is that particular investment going to be able to return quickly enough before it becomes passé? One example is Boogie Heads—and specifically not a downer on them whatsoever—but the fact is that some of that stuff is kind of faddish. So everybody's hot and heavy right when they first start out of the gate and then things taper off. But what we did was we took our existing systems and we created something else with that. There's got to be more than one way for it to pay for itself. It's just like a mobile dance floor. You can dance on it but you can also break it up into pieces and make dancer boxes out of it. So there's got to be multiple points of return on investment as opposed to 'This is one singular way that I'm going to see ROI' and that's it."

Rick's dance floor example also highlights how Rick has achieved and maintained his company's stature in a city that is known for its entertainment—a place where the bar is automatically set a bit higher for entertainment companies, right out of the gate. We asked him to elaborate.

"Well, our LED dance floor came to fruition simply by request from a bat mitzvah client, where the mom was from New York and the family had been to many, many New York mitzvahs. I asked her how far she wanted to go, and she said, 'I want to recreate Studio 54.' So we took an approach with a strategic partner of ours that does some pretty good manufacturing. We had all the electronics; they had the ability to manufacture the floor. We held hands on it. I owned the electronics; they owned the floor. We both make money. So it was a good strategic market for us to get into and it's been something that's paid off very well for itself. It's one of the few large LED dance floors even to this day, and we've had it for 10 years. So it's been a really good investment for us and for them too because they were able to make their money back."



CREATING A NETWORK FOR SUCCESS

Rick places a high value on the relationships he has built with other DJs, mentors and friends alike. He mentioned positive connections with Bobby Morganstein (Philadelphia PA), Geoff Carlisle (Birmingham, AL) and Scott Kraft of Chicago. He had the following wisdom to share:

"I think for me it's learn what you learn, be willing to pass it on, and...giving is the door to receiving. And I really do believe that, not just monetarily or faith-based or whatever. But I believe if you are open and willing to give, you will receive so much more.

"So if you help somebody out, they're going to be more than willing to help you out, and I've really experienced that every day just in the things that I do. And then when I realize that I'm becoming selfish and maybe holding things back, God doesn't give me nearly as much as he would if I had just been forthcoming with it."

Wise words for any DJ, from a veteran DJ who is still going strong. **MB**

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Reinvent and Learn from the Best

ALDO RYAN IS NOT AFRAID OF CHANGE

By Mobile Beat Staff

The class clown needed an outlet for his skills and became a DJ. That's the basic explanation of where Aldo Ryan of Aldo Ryan Entertainment (NY & FL) came from.

"I've got to tell you," Aldo explains, "there was always something about being the class clown, growing up in school, and having a good time, just having fun with what I was doing with my learning process..."

"I guess my personality had a very big part to play in why I got into mobile DJ entertainment. I just always wanted to be the life of a party, and have fun with whatever I was doing.

Let's just say that it was always—it started with a family picnic that my parents used to host, where there was probably about 30 people that used to attend, and it was for a gardening organization in Brooklyn, New York. And they'd have a picnic with jazz music, and next year they'd have more people come.

"...I decided instead of just jazz music, let me just go ahead and start switching up the tapes, and the CDs, and putting in some other types of music. Next thing you know, I'm starting to take requests from people, bringing more CDs and more music. Now my father is renting sound systems. And what used to be a 30-person picnic literally turned into a 350-person celebration.

"So basically from about a three-hour picnic, it went to a 10-hour day where we had sound brought in, staging brought in, and we're doing all types of fun interactive line dances, and games, and contests, and activities. I got on the microphone. I started doing weather reports and sports and trivia and all this other stuff, taking special requests, understanding that you got to get some censored versions of music. And it turned into a big family affair.

"And then of course a woman came over to me one day and said, 'Hey, could you do my wedding?' I'm like, 'No, but I'll think about it,' ...I started to get several requests for formal events and I realized that there was something there."



Fast forward and Aldo learned about the DJ business doing children's parties, picnics, and buying his first gear. He learned New York-style formalities and started adding his own personality. His personality was the secret to some major growth of his company, Vibrations Entertainment. He found some great people with outgoing personalities and taught them DJ skills.

But with that growth came some growing pains, mainly from hiring "just anyone" and about nine years later Aldo decided to rebuild his brand. That's when he looked for outside help from established industry players such as Mark Ferrell, Liz Daley, Mitch Taylor, Jason Jones and others.

"I needed full control in what I was doing," Aldo explains. "The truth is I had a full-time job from the time I started DJing all the way up until 2010—a full-time, very well-paying job as director of

operations for a series of schools in Brooklyn. And I was doing great. I had life insurance, health insurance, everything was good.

"Then I took this course in 2010, The Professional Process, and something kind of clicked... I said to myself, 'Hey, you love what you do. You have a great team of people who also want to be able to give a little bit more; why don't you consider doing it right?' If you're going to do it, you do it right. It's another thing that my dad said, and I try to teach our daughter.

"One of the things I had to do was to change my image. My name was Vibrations Entertainment back then—and here I am trying to target a nice upscale wedding market.

"Aldo Ryan Entertainment is who I am and what I do. So I went back to being a single-op. I was able to rebrand, revolutionize the way I do things, take my business a bit more seriously, start getting more quality video and pictures, materials so that my couples, my perspective clients can see—and it's been an amazing change since.

The outside help was a huge factor in Aldo's new success. "But just getting back into some of the training, getting what you're worth was something that pushed me over the edge and changed my entire view of what I do. The Professional Process,

Make It Grand workshop, the Marbecca workshops, the master of ceremonies workshops, bronze, silver, and I just completed gold while I was over at Mobile Beat. I'm going to be taking Bill Herman and Jason Jones' "The Entertainment Experience" this November.

But Aldo has taken what he has learned and spun it his own way. It's what Aldo calls "regional standards."

"We do have something called 'regional standards,' and therefore not every single thing that you learn within the lectures, seminars, workshops, or conferences can



apply...I'm able to go back and train my staff the way I think it's going to be best represented or affected. However, there is the next step, which is now saying, hey, guys—I'm giving them little appetizers as to what I'm doing and how I'm going in the direction I'm going. And we all love the direction that we're going, thank goodness, as things are doing good here.

"But I'll tell you one thing, now it's time where I'm starting to send my staff for training, send them to these conferences. I just finished telling three of my main staff members that, hey, you will be going to Mobile Beat with me next year."

Aldo wrapped up nicely with some inspiring words that DJs need to hear, about helping the industry get where it needs to be:

"I love performing, and I don't ever see myself not performing, because I just love that feeling at the end of the night when I have a sea of sweaty people just hugging and telling me, 'Dude, you rock' or 'You're the best DJ' or going over to my bride and groom saying, 'This was the best wedding I've ever been to...'

'Those things just really just reinvigorate me. They give me a reason to wake up, other than of course my beautiful family. They give me a reason to wake up and enjoy life in itself, and it gives me purpose. So where do I see myself? I mean, I don't want to ever let this go, but we do have a shelf life.

"And the reason why I decided to rebuild myself back in 2009-2010 is so that I can pass this on to other professionals, people who are like me, who care about life, who care about togetherness, who care about all the values that I mentioned before. And I want to be able to leave that legacy, if anything, and I'm just talking far in advance. But I don't want to name a particular age as to when I'm going to stop performing. I don't see that.

"I don't know when that day is going to happen. I just don't want it to come anytime soon, and I'd like to think that I have at least 20, 25 years left on that mic on the dance floor. But I do want to be able to continue to move more into teaching. I want to be able to get into seminars, workshops, lectures, conferences, and things where I can basically take what has transformed my life, add my own little something in it, again, from the class clown to my own personality, the things that help make me who I am.

"And I'd like to be able to give back to my industry, give back to my community, educate the rest of the public, both on a professional level and on a personal level, how important entertainment is, how important it is to celebrate life, because this is not a dress rehearsal!" **MB**

In the DJ Business for More than the Money

JUSTIN MILLER LOOKS BEYOND THE SURFACE AND HELPS OTHERS DO THE SAME

By Ryan Burger



Mobile Beat is a customer service business where we serve the industry with news, reviews, business advice and much more; the disc jockey service that embraces the idea that it is a service that exists to help people have fun will be successful if they truly live it, and do it well.

Justin Miller of Master DJ of the Quad Cities of Iowa/Illinois has firmly grasped this concept and has done tremendously well in a small market because he is serving this way. While I have talked to Justin before seeing him again at the Photo Booth Expo this past spring and he had spoken for Mobile Beat 10+ years ago at one of the summer events, we hadn't spent a lot of time talking until just this summer. In him I could see the right attitude and those fantastic midwestern values that people from around here have. Justin has partially "graduated" from his business to grow beyond being "just a DJ" and done much more with his skills both in speaking in front of people, managing people and helping people achieve their dreams. But let's start back at the beginning, which in his case was when he was 14 years old, detassling corn.

"Okay. So this is kind of funny," says Justin. "The origin story of the company since we started with the Quad Cities is, when I was 14 years old, the only job I could get was de-tassling corn, which is basically put a bunch of underage workers in a field and we pull parts off the top of the corn plants all day long and get cold, wet, and muddy. I did that for a whole summer and saved up enough money to get two DJ speakers.

"That was my whole summer's work—two DJ speakers, and I thought, I'm never going back in the corn field again to do that. I really didn't ever want to work for anyone in general at that point either. So once I had those, I started playing music for friends,

family, like I think a lot of us did. My first paying job was in 1996, and that was for my own junior high school dance. Beyond that, I started doing more work like that with schools.

"About one year later, I think, I did my first wedding. For those of you keeping track, I'm still in junior school at that point and being driven around by my older brother's friend, who happened to know another disc jockey as well. So I was able to get a little mentoring there. Flash forward, it's like a 10 or 15 years to overnight success, right? A bunch of hard work, a bunch of prodding along.

"Now the point we're at today," Justin continues, "it is a full-time company. It's always been my only source of income. As a full-time operation, we have two people in the office here, anywhere from five to 20 part-time, depending upon the time of the year doing events. We actually only run two DJ systems, so not so huge on the DJ side of things.

"In the wedding arena, where Master DJ and Photo Booths spends most of the time, he appeals to the high end bride that wants to spend on average of \$2,000. Justin tells us, "When you start to get to beyond the core package, you are getting more tangible things thrown in. So we do a lot of production-type elements in our larger packages. We do overhead trussing and rigging. We do up lighting. We do special effects, streamers and confetti if they want to do that. We do the little line cloud dance. Pretty much if you name it, we offer it."

While Justin now only spends a day or so a week on the DJ business, and concentrates more on what we will talk about below, he has been able to do this because of his staffing and training program.

"Staffing, honestly, is our biggest challenge here and always has been, probably due to my high standards," Justin says. "We have a training program. It's a very slow training program though. It takes a unique individual willing to come in through that system. We have hired existing talent and tried to pull them in and mesh them in, but I haven't found a good way to make that happen yet.

"So we still prefer to train and grow from within, with people with zero experience and push them on through. There are one or two operators with more DJs than us. There's nobody doing anywhere close to the production elements we are locally. The multi-ops that are larger than us tend to have a more streamlined approach, whereas we can customize and do a lot more unique things with our business."

Justin's passion for the business clearly comes through with his employees. He also enjoys sharing what he has learned with others, "...helping other people market their companies more effectively and trying to get beyond the hurdles."

"The more I do that, the more I see that the hurdles are very common," he explains. "Everyone thinks they have unique situations and there are unique factors with them, but more often than not, the solutions are very similar and they just need a little push, a little help in the right direction. That's what I'm hoping to do here in the magazine and at the [Photo Booth Expo] seminar."

An important point that he hit on during his seminar at the Photo Booth Expo was the #1 thing that is holding up most businesses, and one that all owners/DJs should feel...

"That's actually the person running the business. Even in my own business, I am the bottleneck, and that's why I try and get more and more out of it. So your skill set is limiting the business skill set. That could be in a number of areas.

"In mine, actually, it's quite obvious. It's probably staff development—not one of my favorite tasks. For others, it's 'How do I just find more brides?' or 'How do I get in front of more schools?' If people don't have problems with those, it's usually 'How do I get more of those to book?' or 'How do I get them to pay more?'

"If people can incrementally increase each one of those just a little bit—we're not talking massive changes here, unless someone really wants to do that—a little tweak in each of those areas can often double or triple what someone is putting in their bank account at the end of the day. Which, I hate to say it, but it's a number a lot of disc jockey owners don't think about or don't know because they're kind of, like, 'I buy these DJ toys with my money and that's what I do.'

"Well, if you take all that money away that you spent on that, what's left at the end of the day? That's the number that I pay attention to and that's what I look for in business opportunities. That's what really matters at the end of the day, how much my family is getting, not how many new DJ toys I buy."

Justin's passion is infectious, and though he's got a good 10 years less than I have in this industry, I feel he's someone that DJs of all ages and experience levels need to listen to. He ended with some great advice that goes along with a lot of what MBLV is all about and what DJs are wanting to do.

"So most people, when you ask them what their goals are or what they want to do with their business, they'll give you a dollar figure. I want to make \$100,000. That's a pretty common one. I want to make \$100,000 this year. The problem is they don't know why they want to make \$100,000. So, for me, money by itself is not a huge motivator. I think that's why we've gotten further. So some of my seminar content is on goal setting.

What's your goal and what's the reason behind that goal? For instance, let's not do a financial one because that's too easy. Everyone can do that. Let's do if someone says I want to lose weight. It's a very common goal, right? So when I ask them why, the answer is probably to be healthier; maybe it's to live longer. That's great, but that's still not the motivator yet, so we have to go one level deeper. Why is it important that you're healthier and you live longer?

"Now we might start to get some real answers. Maybe it's 'I want to be able to live to see my kid graduate college' or something along those lines. That's what matters. So if someone doesn't break down their business to that level, at least three levels deep, the motivation's going to be lacking, they're going to be meandering, they're not going to have a direction.

"So hopefully," Justin sums up, "I can help people get that direction, and then give them the idea on how to actually move there, rather than just getting them all excited. It's like...if you motivate a fool, then you have nothing more than a motivated fool, right? Well, we'll make sure we don't have motivated fools. We have people with actionable ideas that they can implement and get the results that they want."

For more on Justin's entertainment business, check out Masterdjonline.com and go to Profit911.biz to find out about his business consulting, speaking and writing. **MB**



DJ Toolbox

DROPBOX, EMERGENCY BOXES AND MORE

DJ Toolbox is where entertainers share the tools that help them achieve success—tools of all kinds. If you want to share yours, please send (to rb@mobilebeat.com) descriptions of your tools, how you use them, and why they are essential equipment for your business.

GREGG HOLLMAN

AMBIENT DJ SERVICE • TRENTON, NJ

Mackie 802 VLZ4: I purchased this 8-channel ultra-compact mixer in early 2014 and love it. I primarily use it at weddings for onsite ceremonies and cocktail hours. There are a wealth of inputs to accommodate live musicians and microphones, and an RCA input to accommodate a CD player or iPod. Microphones sound crystal clear running through the VLZ4. Accordingly, for karaoke gigs, I often run my Denon MC-6000 (known for its hot microphone inputs) through the Mackie board, resulting in a better sounding show. The Mackie 802 VLZ4, when paired with two fully stocked iPods that I keep in my gear bag serves as a great backup solution in the event of laptop failure.

Billboard Book of Top 40 Hits: This 900-page book by Joel Whitburn contains a history of the American music charts, spanning from 1955 to the present. The bulk of the text contains song information sorted by artist. The final section of the book includes a wealth of artistic achievements and musical trivia. I often use the the book to research music for themed parties and class reunions.

Bottle of Aleve: With a busy performance schedule and an aversion to using roadies, I am very much a hands-on DJ. To avoid the feeling of having “been run over by a truck” on Monday morning, I’ll often take a couple of Aleve on Sunday to help me ride out the weekend pain-free. For body aches and pains, I’ve found that Aleve is the best brand on the market.

Promotional materials: Passing business cards is good, but even better is passing a client, prospect or networking partner something that you created. In my case, I pass homemade mix CDs as well as copies of my recently published book, *The Bride’s Guide to Selecting the Perfect Wedding DJ*. Gifts like these, which are relatively inexpensive to produce, cement you as an expert and make you more memorable.

Ace of Sales contact management software: This system, associated with sales guru Jeffrey Gitomer, provides a beautiful graphical interface for emails. These professional, aesthetically pleasing email templates have helped increase our company’s closing rate, converting more prospects into clients. At \$20 a month, I find it a great investment.

ALAN DODSON

TOP GUN SYSTEMS • BRISTOL, TN

Several years ago I created a “wedding rescue kit” that I carry to all events. It is a briefcase-sized road case containing items that



I have found helpful due to accidents, omissions and errors on someone’s part. The list is too extensive for this brief description, but it includes things like a small hot glue gun, a box of assorted safety pins, a sewing kit with extra black and white buttons, TWO different sized crochet hooks (for bustling gowns), an iron, Tylenol, anti-acids, super glue, white duct tape, (gaff tape as well), Scotch tape, blue masking tape, rubber bands, hair gel, combs, black shoelaces, ChapStick, deodorant and much much more. The case is full. I will add a link to my full list at www.top-gunsystems.com/emergency.pdf

DAVE TERNIER

SPECIAL REQUEST WEDDINGS • MANITOBA, CANADA

Travelreporter: This app (available only on iOS devices) has been a true lifesaver for me when it comes to accurately keeping track of distance traveled by vehicle for any work related matters. From traveling to client meetings and events to stepping out to drop something off for shipping or going to the bank, each and every trip I make with my vehicle anywhere is logged with Travelreporter.

As the description in the App Store describes, Travelreporter will automatically log your start address, end address, distance travelled in miles or kilometers, time for the trip, and, if you want, place/customer and the cars odometer reading. You don’t have to enter any text, but if you want, you can add a note about what the trip was for. You can see your trip on a map, to help you navigate both during the trip, and later if you want to recall your route. All of the data can then be exported into a common spreadsheet format for incredibly easy processing and adding up of total distances, number of trips, etc.

Dropbox: I realize Dropbox has probably been mentioned numerous times before in this column, but the benefits are so numerous, it needs mentioning again. As a single operator, I do most of the things associated with my business. Therefore, saving time managing what files are where is a big deal to me. With the exception of some large video files, every file I own exists within Dropbox. I subscribe to their 1 TB service which means that my entire computer hard drives are synced with Dropbox (my computers operate off of 1 TB hard drives as well). From working in my office on a 27" iMac to hitting the road with my first MacBook Pro for client meetings, all of my files are always the same, regardless of where I find myself working from.

In addition to my documents, my entire music library is managed via Dropbox as well (approx 205 GB total). This

gives me the ability to manage my audio files from any of my computers without having to worry that my second MacBook Pro is up to date. Because my 2nd MacBook Pro is strictly for audio performance with Serato, I use the "selective sync" feature of Dropbox so that only my "Master Music" folder is mirrored to that computer. This way, none of the other files that Dropbox also manages exist on that computer. It is used strictly for music and Dropbox makes that happen for me.

Cranked Energy Bars: Weddings are long here in Canada: from early to mid-afternoon ceremonies to the last song of the night at anytime between midnight and 2:00 AM, it's a long time to go without a good, healthy meal. This is where a good quality and healthy energy bar comes into play. Cranked Energy Bars are made fresh (keep them in the freezer) just a few hours away from where I live. I found out about them through a photographer I once worked with. He too, doesn't eat at the weddings he is involved with, and for him, these bars are the perfect meal replacement. Ever since then, I make sure to have a case or two of these useful and delicious energy bars in my freezer.

Gmail for Business: I can appreciate those that use computer operating system-based email programs (Outlook, Mail, etc.) but none have been as useful for me as having Gmail manage my dave@specialrequestweddings.com email address. It's only about \$50/year and I now get full access to my email from any computer of mine and really any computer in the world. In addition, its useful labeling system helps keep my entire inbox and folder structure incredibly well organized. Lastly, the power of Google search allows me to find older archived emails with incredible speed and efficiency.

Wireless microphones (more than one!): I can not imagine being able to do my job without a wireless microphone. I would be one unhappy camper if all wireless mics suddenly disappeared. From time to time on DJ chat boards I'll notice someone just getting one "finally" and "for the first time." Just get one, quick...now! I always have a minimum of two wireless microphones set up for weddings and will often add a third so that I don't have to be running microphones across the room between people speaking.

TONY AXTELL

EMPIRE PRODUCTIONS • SIOUX FALLS, SD

Dropbox: This has saved me on so many occasions. We back up everything in our company to Dropbox. Along with backing up copies of contracts, reception and event planners, invoices, we also use this heavenly gift to share employee schedules, important training files, and any other forms that way my team members can always have access to planning materials on the go. It also works on any type of device so that is very handy too!

Mobile hotspot: Performing in the boondocks of South Dakota, wi-fi is still new concept in many places and our mobile hotspots have helped us save an event from time to time. Having internet access has allowed my company to utilize Virtual DJ's Netsearch when we had a laptop freeze up or needed a planning form that was on Dropbox but not in the event folder on site.

Backup laptop: Let's face it: Laptops are a dime a dozen these days, and you can find a good backup-quality laptop to carry around with you for as little as a few hundred dollars. This have been vital in situations where guests have spilled drinks, our main system locked up, or the clients have surprised us with a last minute DVD slideshow with no means to play it!

DJ Emergency Backpack: All of my team members have one. Each backpack will have the following items:

- 1x Corded mic with 5' mic cable (great for if the wireless fails)
- 2x RCA to 1/8" cables(soundcards and mixers can fail at any time, so it is always best to have a backup option)
- 4x packs of batteries, 9-volt, AA, and even AAA: Having extra batteries is the best \$10 you will ever spend and never remember!
- iPod / iPad with backup music library. This is vital incase a hard-drive were to fail.
- Laptop, as mentioned above. Don't question it—just do it!
- Point and shoot camera / GoPro. Marketing your events is huge for return business or advertising to potential clients. Always show up early, and take a few pictures of your setup, your live event, and maybe some casual portraits of guests having fun. (But stay out of the photographers way.)
- Backup tie, deodorant, hair gel, toothbrush, tie clips, cufflinks, shoes and belt: This may seem silly, but you are the one that will look awful at the event when you forget one of these and you are hours away from the nearest store. Again, we're in South Dakota, where you drive for hours without seeing human life!

Business Cards: I never leave home without a few on me. I have these things hidden in all my jackets, wallet, bags, computer bags and mic cases. When you are really rocking an event, people will come up to you and ask who are and if you have a card. That is the time to hand them one, thank them for the compliment and say "Enjoy the show!" **MB**

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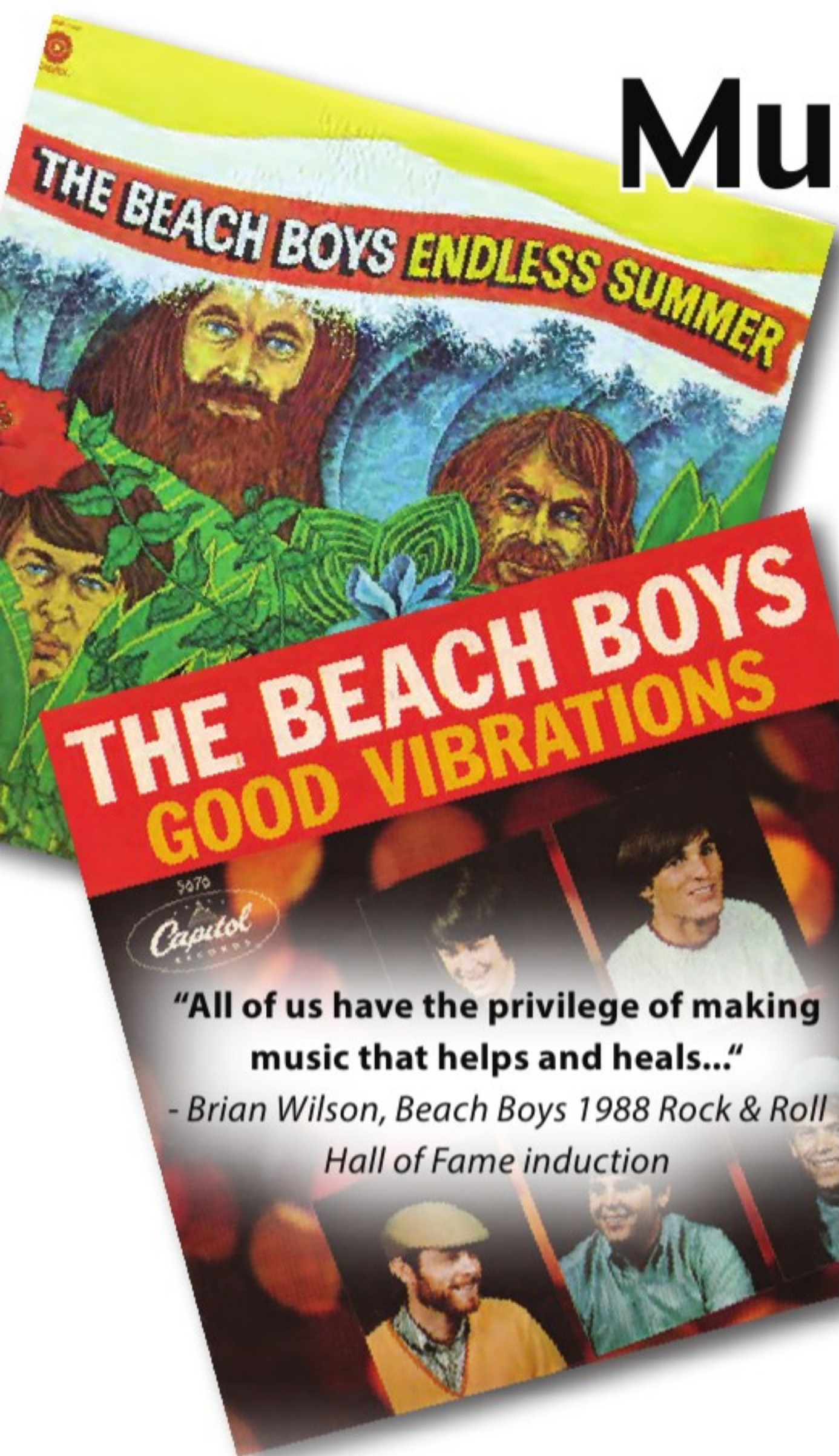
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Music "Helps and Heals"

By Mike Ryan



I grew up in Los Angeles in the sixties at the start of the modern surfing craze. Music was shifting away from Elvis and Chubby Checker to surf bands like Jan and Dean ("Surf City"), Dick Dale, "The King of the Surf Guitar," and The Beach Boys. The Beach Boys were my favorite and I couldn't get enough of their music.

It seemed like the whole world was surfing back then. Hollywood actors were singing, dancing and riding long boards in "beach party films" or "surfploitation flicks" like *Beach Party* and *Beach Blanket Bingo*, starring Frankie Avalon and former Disney Mouseketeer Annette Funicello. Television had a hit with *Gidget* the surfer girl, starring the diminutive Sally Field ("girl + midget" = Gidget) and a "real"

surfing movie classic, *The Endless Summer*. In my day dreams I imagined myself on a "Surfin' Safari," hanging ten (toes on the end of a surfboard) and having "Fun, fun, fun, 'til her daddy took the T-Bird away."

I remember the day a UPS driver delivered my (\$110) 9'-6" long Gordon and Smith custom surfboard with two redwood stringers down the middle, a black reverse fin and a gold G and S sticker—it was amazing and I couldn't wait to hit the waves.

But then my life took a "Wipe Out." My parents got divorced and my father, a Navy officer, decided to warehouse me in a military academy. Apparently he didn't approve of my newly adopted "surfing lifestyle." For the next couple of years, instead of waxing down my surfboard, I was spit polishing my plain-toed black oxford shoes, making hospital corners on my bunk, and marching in formation. The radio was the only link to my former life. I remember the new sound of the British Invasion and a new group called the Beatles hitting the airwaves. Although I enjoyed songs by the Fab Four, the Beach Boys remained my favorite band.

Two years passed, my mother remarried, retrieved me from the military school and we all moved to the little farm town of Porterville, California. If you've ever seen the television show *Happy Days* or the movies *Grease* or *American Grafitti* you'd swear they were filmed in this town. (*American Grafitti* was actually set in Modesto, California, 160 north of Porterville). There were lots of classic '50s and '60s hot rods and custom pickups and we

would cruise Main Street in the evenings, hang out at a popular malt shop, eating burgers and drinking cherry marshmallow Cokes. Late at night we'd listen to the radio and a wild disk jockey named Wolf Man Jack on XERB the 50-thousand-watt border blaster Mexican radio station.

Even though Porterville was an idyllic scene, I was about to experience another wipeout: being bullied. After two years of living in a boys school I was ready to meet girls ("Girls, Girls, Girls Were Made to Love" —Eddie Hodges). At my first high school dance I met a cute brunette who swore she didn't have a boyfriend. She lied, and soon I became aware that he wanted to kick my butt, just for dancing with his girl. The following Friday afternoon as school was getting ready to be let out my spidey senses were on high alert. Shear overwhelming terror swept over me when I opened the door to leave and there he was, "my bully." He shoved me so hard I flew backwards onto my backside and slid about four feet. A teacher helped me avoid getting pummeled by this jerk and his buddies.



Beach Boys lead singer Mike Love (seated, L) with his red beard and his cousin, drummer Dennis Wilson (seated, R) in his plaid shirt dining with my cousins.



Mike Ryan started out writing for news radio, and has been a DJ in the SoCal radio market on KGB and KSDS. He mobiles as Mike on the Mike. He is also the inventor/owner of Frankenstand Powered Speaker Stands.

A private moment shared between my cousin Vicky, then a high school senior, and Dennis Wilson (RIP), the "real Beach Boy." Every time she hears a Beach Boys song, Vicky remembers the crush she had on the drummer of a rock & roll band one summer night, long ago.



For the rest of the year I spent a good amount of time holed up in my bedroom listening to my Beach Boy albums ("In My Room" –The Beach Boys) terrified to run into the bully and his gang in this small town where it was hard to avoid others. Fortunately, the following year he moved out of town, so I was able to breathe a little easier and started to enjoy the full high school experience. I became friends with the only other "surfer" in town, joined a rock band and even had a girlfriend all to myself

Right after high school, another series of events rocked my world—again. This time it was the draft and Vietnam. I joined the Navy and remember the day the Greyhound bus, filled with us fresh recruits, turned into the San Diego Navy Boot Camp main gate.

I mumbled to myself "Oh no, not again"—it had only been three years since my military school experience. But fortunately I was somewhat seasoned to military life and I sailed through basic training. Upon graduation I was stationed on a huge cruiser with wooden decks—it was old. The ship had just returned from two years overseas and would be stationed in San Diego for the next two.

To my delight, I was once again living near the beach and got back into surfing. ("Catch a Wave" –The Beach Boys). Yet, after two glorious years in "America's Finest City" I longed for adventure, and transferred to a brand new, but smaller, ship and headed to the exotic Far East.

believe it, here I was in a war zone across an ocean, and my heroes, the band that got me through some seriously good and not-so-good times, was there hanging out with my "kinfolk" back in Porterville!

Here's what happened: One of my

My first "West PAC" overseas tour was as exciting and as interesting as I hoped it would be. But then a couple events back home made me pine for California. First, my high school sweetheart sent me a "Dear John" letter ("Help Me Rhonda" –The Beach Boys). I guess I wasn't surprised. Then one day at "mail call" I opened a letter from home to find pictures of my cousin's home with—drum roll—the actual friggin' Beach Boys milling about, eating and visiting with my family! I couldn't

cousins started promoting concerts, somehow got hooked up with the Beach Boys, and convinced them to perform at the local junior college in Porterville. Since the town was so small, the only safe and convenient "green room" was my cousin's ranch house. After enjoying lots of wine, the "half sloshed" band arrived late to the concert. But they reportedly gave a fantastic show nonetheless.

Needless to say, my family and friends had a once-in-a-lifetime experience hanging out with some "cool people" and one of the most famous bands in the world. I think I was more upset about missing meeting the Beach Boys than I was about losing my girlfriend.

The moral of this piece, if there is one, is that before we judge other people's musical choices ("I hate rap" or "I hate country" or...), maybe we should think about how music has impacted our own lives, how much it means to all of us. Music and the Beach Boys made an incredible impact on my life, helping me survive separated parents, a military school, a bully, and even a war. Their music, the one constant in my life, was always right there with me. Thank you Beach Boys: You got me through a lot of "stuff" in my life. ("God Only Knows" –The Beach Boys). **MB**

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MOBILE MOVIES

PART 2: GETTING GIGS AND KEEPING THEM LEGAL

By Ryan Burger

In the last issue we showed you what you needed technically to do “big screen cinema” gigs in the most basic form. Now that you have the basic tools, how do you go out and get these events?

Ideally, you want to be finding potential clients for these events before they have even thought of it, so we will cover how to pitch groups on doing such an event. We'll also discuss handling the calls when they are already interested in doing such events, as well as going after already established movie night gigs.

YOU FIND THEM

The best potential lead for these movie events is every city's parks and recreation department. I'd recommend you start with your own town where you hopefully already know some people that can get you your start on this. This is the ideal group to talk to, and honestly, I'd offer to do it for free. Yes, I said for free. Just like how many DJs do their first celebrations for relatives and friends at no cost to get the experience, I'd recommend you offer it in your own neck of the woods for the ultimate price of \$0. As we will discuss later in the pricing portion of this, your services do have some value, and that value needs to be established with



them as a discounted deal so when it takes off as a cool event that the city does every month, you can make some money off your investment and time. But you need to start somewhere.

Other groups that would consider doing such an event include committees of residents that might organize the local community festival, and charity groups like the Lions Club, Jaycees, or similar. Be aware though that the charity groups run on practically no budget and will be hoping you will do it for free all the time.

THEY CALL YOU

If you have marketed yourself well with details on your site about your new services provided, they will hopefully find you via a Google search. Or potentially they have you on file as a DJ, and you just need to update them that you now offer big screen cinema services. This is where you will need to have pictures of your screen and system setup. Make sure to show it in what would be considered its natural setting with it darker, and a movie on the screen, preferably something family friendly with a noticeable character big on it to the point that they could probably identify the movie based on the photograph. In the past we have used shots with *Spongebob Squarepants*, a pirate from *Pirates of the Caribbean*, *Shrek* or similar. This is where doing a local gig cheap or free allows you to have a live environment for promo pictures, showing families watching the movie more than just your gear setup and a movie on the screen.

When you are talking to this potential customer the goal, just like when you are the DJ for a wedding, is to provide more service than they are expecting. Explain to them how you have done this before and know how to work with the movie licensing groups, handle some pre movie entertainment, work with sponsors and more.

YOU COMPETE FOR THEM

In Des Moines, as mentioned before, there are more than a couple of groups doing movies on a regular basis during the summer. Some of these groups have gone as far as already purchasing full sets of hardware to do it themselves. Obviously we are too

late with them, but due to the challenges of this event, there are opportunities to pick up a gig when the organization decides to "call in the pros."

One of our elementary schools did movie projection themselves the first time and that was their test run to see if they were going to do it for real with us the next semester. They set up a projector taken out of one of the classrooms, used the gym sound system and projected on one of the big white walls of the gym. It worked, and as I found out when they called me, they knew they wanted to have a professional do the job the next time, but didn't want to do the higher level event before testing it themselves first.

Thus, whenever you are able to attend another mobile movie event, you need to do research. Be there about 30 minutes before it is scheduled to start and see who is running the event. Is it a volunteer group with a OfficeMax projector and a sheet hung on the wall or an outside service like yours? Take notes and then use those notes to set up an appointment or at least a scheduled phone call a week or so later. Come to them with productive ideas they can use to improve their event. The ideas need to consist of more than just "use me instead." Give them some genuinely good ideas with no strings attached.

PRICING

Now here is where things get a little messy. Just like how I have seen good DJs work for \$600 and bad DJs work for sometimes multiples of that, you have to price yourself well enough so that you are making money off of the event but not hurting yourself by turning down other gigs to do an event for fewer bucks.

I would recommend you consider pricing such services similarly to the range you would charge for an average wedding reception or large-format school dance such as a homecoming or prom. In my market that means it would be between \$800-\$2,000, depending on many factors. One important factor is the day of the week they want to do the event on. Chances are it's a Friday or Saturday. I would recommend that the first discount/free gig you do be on a Friday if at all possible, since that's likely a less busy day for your DJ business, especially during the summer when outdoor movie events happen.

DO IT LEGALLY

As part of my research for this article, I contacted a couple of the companies that my clients have used to legally show movies to an audience, namely, the Motion Picture Licensing Corporation (MPLC) and Swank. Any time you are bringing together a group of people not in your home or business for something that is not a normal activity for that group and are showing a movie, you need to pay for licensing. Watching movies in your home with your family, extended family or whatever is just fine. But, for instance, showing a movie at a family reunion in your backyard with 100+ people in attendance is something that might be on the edge, and I recommend talking with one of these agencies.

As Eileen Korte, Licensing Manager for MPLC (mplc.org), explains, "Prior to home video cassettes, the only way to see a movie outside of the theatre was by renting a 16-millimeter print directly from the studios or an authorized sub-distributor. That studio would then mail you a copy of the movie for public viewing. When video stores were created or founded, people stopped calling the studios because they wanted to obtain that content on the road from a local Blockbuster store. However, that license requirement still remains the same.

"When you rent a video," she continues, "or even when you

buy it or stream it from Netflix...that content doesn't come with public performance rights because it's intended for personal, private use only. So whenever you're showing outside of your home or even in something like a residential community—a shared area in a residential community like a park or a clubhouse—you need a public performance license."

The MPLC offers indoor licenses called the MPLC Umbrella License. This license is paid for on an annual basis of \$110-\$265 and allows schools to show movies that are not part of their regular curriculum plans and are planned for general entertainment. And that's where the distinction comes in, when the group is gathered in a gym or similar place and it's not for purely educational purposes. While this rate is lower than some other avenues, the key is that it's only for indoor showings and only for "20th Century Fox and 600 other educational independent and specialty producers like Discovery Channel, and Scholastic."

This type of license is also common for libraries, senior centers, and homeowners associations that want to regularly show movies to their patrons. You can check out more information at mplc.org or by calling 800-462-8855. While I'm sure that there is a great selection of movies and programs available through these sources, the other company that I spoke with, Swank, has a different option.

Swank Motion Pictures (swank.com) is the most common licensing group that we have worked with, although most of the time our company is not making the direct connection with Swank. Swank is the place to call for one-time showings, outdoor movies and for a better selection of content.

Rachael Pickerell from Swank spent a lot of time with me on the phone with me on this article and her assistance is appreciated. She is the rep for our area that most of our clients would be

working with, thus when we hear from a new group wanting to do a movie event, we will refer them to her. The basics on costs through Swank follow:

Outdoor Pricing: Title Specific Licensing

- 200 people or less: \$175-\$350 per title
- 200-500 people: \$350-\$550
- 500-1,000 people: \$500-\$850

Indoor Pricing (Community Centers/Event Centers):

- 50 people or less: \$100 / (6) or more indoor screenings in a year, \$75
- 50-100 People: \$150 / (6) or more screenings in a year, \$125
- Over 100 People: same as outdoor pricing (see above)

*If you are charging admission for your movie, you'll pay the original licensing fee OR 50% of your box office income, whichever is greater. If you are selling concessions, you won't have to report that money back to the agency.

Rachael outlined the normal licensing process:

- "You'll complete the form attached (you can include your credit card information if that is your preferred method of payment or feel free to leave it off).
- I will set up your account and we will discuss specific movies/pricing.
- You will confirm the movie/date / I will send you a confirmation of price, date, and title in the form of a pre-invoice.
- You will pay for the license, and the movie will ship.
- Your event will be a success! If you couldn't show the movie due to an unforeseen circumstance, please let me know and I will make sure to make a note on your account that you'll have 1 year to reshow your movie at no additional licensing fee.
- You'll return the movie."

Rachael obviously enjoys her job and really works as a consultant to the groups showing the films. She said "I think it does take a little bit of research and just knowing what would work best for your group. But what I see as the most popular, especially for these outdoor shows—you know, 90 percent of them I'd say are these really family friendly shows. So think about your really popular animated titles or PG titles. That's where I see the most success in these shows. But screening your events, I think, is really important. Or making the events more of—not just showing a movie and putting it on, but also having an event that goes along with it."

Another agency that came to my attention right before sending this article to press was Criterion Pictures (criterionpicusa.com). They cover 20th Century Fox, Dreamworks and others on an exclusive basis and I found out about them when researching showing *The Princess Bride* for one of our clients. They function in a similarly to Swank Motion Pictures in most ways, as you look at movies they can license for you and submit information for a quote online at criterionpicusa.com.

So, we have the gear covered, the gigs covered—and your butt covered on licensing...in the next issue we will tell you how to take mobile movies "big time" by raising the bar on gear and services offered. **MB**



Colorful, Compact Combo

CHAUVET GIG BAR IRC

By Mark Evans



I got my first light show in 1986. I actually bought it from a drummer friend of mine and it was basically five floods with gels and a hand-made controller that had five on/off switches that correlated with the floodlights. I had two units of, one for each side of the stage.

Moving into the '90s I went into the newly developing "spin and puke" lights, then to the 2000s with DMX to LED's to...and finally the all-in-one light shows and Chauvet's newest version of the Gig Bar IRC. It has taken me months to get these because they are so popular they had a long waiting list. This just may be the perfect mobile DJ portable light show.

The Gig Bar IRC comes in a very nice custom molded case. It is lightweight and the lights sit snugly inside. It also comes with a sturdy tripod with case, a wireless footswitch and a remote control. Two sets of mounting brackets are included, which gives you the ability to mount it on a tripod or side brackets to mount it to a truss. I was very surprised to find all this in the box and yet it is still very light and portable. The Gig Bar IRC comes with two pars and two Kintas (derby's), four strobes and one laser. The pars and Kintas can be arranged in any position you want. It comes setup as the two Kintas on the outside and the pars on the inside. These sit under the strobe and the laser sits on top. The laser can be angled at almost 180 degrees, so you can aim it where needed. The pars and Kintas can swivel from left to right and can be angled up and down.

There are many ways to control the light: wireless remote, wireless footswitch, auto mode, sound active mode and three different DMX modes which are 3-Ch, 9-Ch and 20-ch. The auto programs and sound active mode are only available in the 3-ch mode. In the higher DMX settings you will need to program step by

step. Not a major deal breaker because most people are buying this unit to run in stand-alone mode or use one of the remotes.

So far, I am in love with the remote. There are also many configurations here, blackout, auto and sound. Under the auto and sound modes you can select different programs using the 0-9 keypad. One program is the pars, one for Kintas and then several variations for each, one for all on and several others that mix the four lights together. You can select the strobe or fade mode by simply clicking that particular button. The wireless foot switch has four pedals: blackout, music, color and auto. Clicking each pedal multiple times will get you into the different patterns.

The laser, pars and Kinta's as mentioned are interchangeable and connect with a single cable, which could mean in the future that Chauvet may introduce new fixtures that could replace or interchange with the bar.

The Gig Bar IRC is just under four feet in length and only weighs 14 pounds, for all the lights you get. The tripod will extend to eight feet with a leg width of just under four feet. The Kinta's are rated at 6 watts and come with two red, two blue and two green. The pars are 2.5 watts and are Tri-Color RGB. The laser is rated at 30mW for the green and has a wavelength of 532 nm. The red is 100 mW and 650 nm. The strobes are 1 watt each and there are four of those. Each light has an expected life span of 50,000 hours.

I found that the Gig Bar IRC, as a whole, performed very well in a large room. The lights are bright, adjustable and offer a nice variety of the most popular effects. My favorite use so far is having all the lights on in sound active mode; it's like a box of chocolates, you never know...well you know the rest. The variety of lights going to the music is very exciting and it really looks like you spent hours programing the lights for each song. I ended up buying two systems because I like to have one on each side of the stage or right behind each speaker.

Setup was amazingly fast. Put up the tripod, mount the lights, plug it in and you are ready to go. DMX cables will add a few minutes but if you want a little more control over the lights that is the best way to set up.

So who is this light show for? With the system's versatility, DJs from beginner to advanced will get a lot out of it. This light show would not be good for a larger auditoriums, but is great for modestly-sized weddings, backyard parties, birthday parties and other celebrations. I plan on using one Gig Bar IRC for smaller shows (say 50-75 people) and bring both of them for larger shows. **MB**

www.chauvetlighting.com



A Tasty Little Shot of Light

APE LABS' LIGHT CAN MAY BE THE TINIEST UPLIGHT AROUND

By Brad Feingold

Recently I came back into the DJ world thanks to a few friends who I have worked with before. And since I have been gone, some time has passed and there is a lot to learn. The one major thing that always bothered me in my previous DJ life was hauling equipment. Even though the end result was great, there was always a downside of the weight and size of the equipment. But thanks to the progression of technology, we no longer have to lug heavy amplifiers, speakers and even our music collection. A wise old man once said, "Size matters not." But was that just a phrase from one of the most memorable movies or does that pertain to life as well?

Uplights, one of the most recent event lighting fads, has become a highly demanded add-on for receptions and private parties. And there are a lot of really great options to choose from. But what do you look for in regards to lights? I look for vivid color, compatibility with controllers, size of the lights and even the need to deal with the cords. And there is always room in a DJ's setup for new and different lighting, isn't there?

Enter the Ape Labs Light Can. I ran across their booth at the Mobile Beat show in Las Vegas and was intrigued. I spoke to the creator of this revolutionary light, who told me how he was able to create something so small and useful. It's a simple and short story too. He actually said that he was sitting around a table with some friends drinking a Red Bull thinking, "How could I get a light into a can?"

Lo and behold, they were able to do it. I am so used to having something set up with power cords, stands and even the settings on lights that I was really shocked to see how simple operating these lights is.

OPENING IT UP

I have always been afraid of opening up a product to see how it ticks. I'm always afraid of losing screws or brackets with DJ equipment, that I leave well enough alone. But when you get to a point of using something as small as the Light Can, it was something that I had to look at. What I found was that there was almost nothing to it. What almost looks like a first-place science project, this was well executed in appearance. But what made it work? Well on the side of the can, there were the ingredients:

"Eco-friendly batteries (Ni-MH) 1. High power RGBW Led, controller PCB, radio transceiver 2.4 GHz, charging plug, one momentary push button and a lot of other delicious components. Enjoy it hot or cold, just make sure it's dark! The Ape is a registered brand of Ape Labs."

So, basically, there are six recharge-



able batteries and a chip that is just a tad bigger than a poker chip that wires into three led lights. At the bottom of the can is all you need to engage this miniscule illuminator. One power button. And it all fits into a can the size of an energy drink.

CORDLESS CAN OF LIGHT

One concept that makes this unique light really easy to use is the portability of the storage and the charging system. Each light has a small input plug that goes directly into the case. Followed by this is a circuit board that has a cord that plugs into the wall. That's it; nothing more.

But what is really cool is how you know that the lights are ready. All twelve lights that come in the case will start to flash red until they are fully charged and then they will start flashing green. It's actually pretty cool when they are all charging since they won't be in sync. The only thing that I consider a minor complaint was that you have to have the lid opened while they are charging. I understand that, like any battery, they can overheat.

CAN CONTROL

This is where things get really interesting. First off, the remote is no bigger in size than a credit card. It will allow you to create four different groups for the programming. Each group will allow you to set up the light for certain effects. Some of the options include: solid color, slow transitions between colors and responding to the beat of the music. There is also an option to adjust the brightness of the light for the effect.

But what also made the lights and the



remotes very useful, was that it was easy to separate the lights so you have half of the lights flashing to the music while the other half stays at a solid color to set the mood and also match the colors of the event. Because of the programming ability of the lights, you are able to adjust the LED lights to a solid color that comes closest to the color of the brides dress, table setting, flowers, etc.

ON DISPLAY

When using any type of uplights, it is important to make sure that the spacing between the lights is far enough that they don't blend into each other (unless that is the effect that you are looking for, of course). The same applies to the Light Can. There are two types of lenses that come with the set: a basic lens with no spread on the projection of the light; and also a lens that will push the light to more of a wide beam effect.

The first test I did was with a white tablecloth that was given to me to use when setting up my equipment. This actually worked really well with the four lights that I put under the table. It was even more interesting when I changed the effect to go with the music. I will pause for a minute to say, if you decide to get these, get the white speaker stand covers and use a white scrim, if possible. It really changes the look and mood of the equipment, rather than using just the black scrim and table cover. I've noticed that some DJs like to put the lights inside the speaker stand to give it a nice looking appearance. That would be my next purchase.

For the second test, I set them up throughout the room in

front of pillars. When I spread them out, unfortunately they didn't really shine that well against the brown pillars that the room had. However, the white wall and movie screen that were at the event showed a lot better. The bottom line is, it is all going to depend on your setting to really show the quality of the lights.

One other test was to set the lights together as the same color and use the second lens that comes with the kit. The convex like lens spreads the light out a little better and will show its effect well when you properly blend the cans together.

The thing to keep in mind when you are using these is that you are not using a direct power source, you are using batteries. Even though they are LED lights, they still hold their own, but they don't have the push that a light with a power supply has.

Thought for expansion: If there is a way to possibly add to the top of the light to help project the beam—a mirror or something extremely shiny to assist, that might help, similar to the lights at an old-style theater; something to cover the light but help project it at the same time.

Obviously, such small lights would not be appropriate for every application. But Light Cans from Ape Labs are great for certain events, especially where extreme compactness and wireless operation are needed. **MB**

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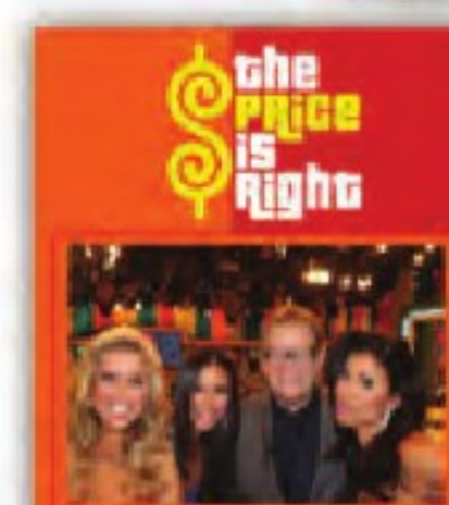
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Place Your Signal

AUDIO-TECHNICA'S SYSTEM 10 PRO: REMOTE ANTENNAS HELP MAXIMIZE WIRELESS COVERAGE

By Jim Weisz

I can still remember buying my first wireless microphone. It was about 15 years ago, not long after I got into the DJ business. I was just out of high school, and on a budget, so I bought a VHF mic since it was much cheaper than a UHF.

I was living in the Chicago suburbs at the time and was primarily DJing school dances. So I was the main person using my wireless mic. It was a good microphone for my use and worked fairly well when others used it for toasts at weddings.

As I started to do more weddings, I decided I needed to invest in a quality microphone. The last thing I wanted was

a dropout or interference when someone was trying to give a toast at a wedding.

My next microphone purchase was a high-end UHF system. It worked very well and I would possibly be using it to this day if it weren't for it being in 700 MHz range (which was banned by the FCC in 2010).

Since replacing that system, I have bought several different wireless microphone systems. Each has been solid, but I am located in Dallas, which is one of the most crowded markets in regards to radio frequencies (RF).

COUNT TO 10

As the guy running sound, everyone looks at you when there's an issue, so you always want it to sound great. So I was very intrigued when Mobile Beat contacted

me about reviewing the new System 10 Pro from Audio Technica. What interested me the most was the fact that this system operates on the 2.4GHz band. That means it is outside the TV bands and is free from RF interference that UHF microphones have to contend with.

On paper the System Pro 10 sounds great. The system features 3 levels of diversity assurance—frequency, time, and space. Basically, what that means is the system has multiple layers of technology built-in to improve communication between the transmitter and receiver. That is very important since we all want to have dropout free transmission of our wireless microphones.

In addition, I was very intrigued by the ability to remote mount the antennas via Ethernet cable. Usually the person using my wireless microphone is less than 50 feet away and are in my line-of-sight. However, there are times when someone is further away, or not line-of-sight. So it would be nice to have the ability to remote mount the antennas in that situation.

TESTING TRANSMITTERS

The system I was sent to review included two receiver units. That meant I was able to run 2 microphones with just one half-rack chassis. That is very appealing because someone could have two of these systems mounted side-by-side, which would give a total of four microphones in one rack space.

I tested the system with the included ATW-T1002 handheld microphone as well as the ATW-T1001 body-pack. Setting up the system was very easy. In fact, the system I was sent for testing didn't include a manual, but I didn't need one. I had it up & running within a matter of minutes





without any need to look up the manual online.

If you are familiar with Audio Technica wireless microphones, you won't be surprised that the power/mute button is on the bottom of the microphone. I like having it there so there isn't an on/off switch for someone to accidentally flip.

I really liked the full, rich sound that came from the handheld. It sounded just as good as my existing wireless microphone system, which is double the cost of the System Pro 10. I was actually very surprised at how good it sounded. In addition, I walked a good 100 feet away from the receiver, including going down a hallway (with a brick wall between me & the receiver) and there was still a great signal.

The system I was sent for testing didn't have a lavalier microphone. Since I own other Audio Technica body packs, I was able to use a lavalier microphone I had on-hand. I already know how the lavalier microphone sounds, but I still wanted to use the body pack to see if the microphone sounded the way I know it should sound. I also wanted to test the range of the body pack.

The testing of the body-pack gave similar results to the handheld—great sound and solid communication between the body-pack and receiver. I did the same test with the body pack that I did with the

handheld microphone and the range was almost identical.

SETTING ANTENNAS (ALMOST) FREE

After putting the handheld and bodypack through their paces, I wanted to test using the remote antennas. I have never heard of a wireless microphone system that handles remote antennas in this way, so I was excited to check it out.

Using the remote antennas is as easy as pushing a button on the receiver right below the antennas. Once you push that button, the box that houses both antennas slides out of the receiver chassis. At that point, you insert it into a holder. That basically puts the antennas into a case so you can mount the case with the antennas anywhere you want. The only "catch" is that it can only be used a maximum of 328 feet away from the receiver. Since I have never had the luxury of remote mounting my antennas in such an easy manner, I think I can make do with 328 feet!

Using the remote antennas was very easy and I could see it being very helpful for DJs who do a lot of wedding ceremonies. Providing wireless microphones for a ceremony can be tricky since you of course want the microphones to sound great, but you're also trying to stay out of the pictures.

With the easy to use remote

mountable antennas, you could be setup a couple hundred feet away from where the ceremony is happening and just mount your antennas closer to that area. I currently use directional antennas for outdoor ceremonies, so these could replace those directional antennas.

The next time I am looking to purchase a new wireless microphone, I would definitely consider the System Pro 10. I like the idea of having a 2.4GHz microphone just in case I'm ever in a situation where I need a microphone that is outside of the TV bands. I also love how easy it is to use the remote mount antennas. Those features alone make the System Pro 10 worth considering when shopping for a new wireless microphone. **MB**

www.audio-technica.com



Jim Weisz owns Discovery DJ & Lighting in Dallas. His company provides DJ and lighting services for over 70 weddings a year. In addition to running his company, he also handles all music services for DJs and radio stations for TM Studios. Jim has been writing for Mobile Beat for more than a decade.

When One Mic (Or Even Four!) Is Not Enough

THE VOCOPRO UHF-8900 8-CHANNEL WIRELESS SYSTEM EASILY MULTIPLIES YOUR MIC POWER

By Ryan Burger

For most DJs, there are only occasionally times when a gig requires more than just a few mics. But if your forays into gigs beyond the normal wedding or school event calls for eight or even 16 microphones, how do you come up with them—without breaking the bank? During a recent month we have had two such occasions at BCP Live, and we found our answer to that question coming from a name well-known among DJs involved with karaoke.

THE ARTS ARE FINE

The first one was a fine arts event where there were three stages in rotating use, all using the same sound system. The event was a showcase of all that the school offered with 40 different performances over a three-hour time frame. Yes, that meant 40 different configurations in 180 minutes. That's less than five minutes per event; and every one of them was very different than the one before and after.

VocoPro to the rescue! Their new UHF-8900 8-Channel Wireless Mic System has eight microphones built into one double-space rack. It has eight separate XLR outputs and two ganged 1/4" outputs that you can use to send combined signals



from channels 1-4 and 5-8 out to a mixer. Volume control is on each channel, along with the settings for channel syncing with the included handheld wireless mics. Additionally, bodypack units are available that work on the two sets of frequencies that the system uses. The system does a scan to find open frequencies on each of the receivers and then can IR flash the channel info to the handheld.

At the fine arts showcase this system worked well. We had two UHF-8900 units going, so in total we had 12 handheld microphones and three body packs in simultaneous use, utilizing all but one of the channels that the combined units

were easy to set up and performed flawlessly.

IT'S SHOW TIME

The second use of the VocoPro UHF-8900 system—a school production of *Fiddler on the Roof*—wasn't quite as crazy of an event, but still showed the usefulness of the system when multiple mics were required. Adding to the five higher end units from another manufacturer that are already part of the school auditorium system, we brought in eight body packs with the VocoPro UHF-8900, giving us a total of 13 wireless lav sets on stage at the same time.

While having 13 active microphones potentially on stage at one time was a lesson in organization and tracking for the sound crew, VocoPro unit proved, once again, to be a reliable team member, providing



excellent sound for all performers, from the lead parts to the supporting players. The key to mixing shows like this is to give everyone their own mic. The VocoPro UHF-8900 system made it easy to accommodate the production's needs, while making set up a breeze for the sound techs. And with

a street price potentially under the \$1,000 mark, having those extra channels ready for the next multi-mic gig is truly affordable, as well. **MB**



provided. With all these mics in action, you would expect there to be at least a challenge in getting the frequencies to play well together, or an increased susceptibility to interference from external electronics, but the UHF-8900 units

www.vocopro.com

A Sound Choice for Modest Occasions

THE MATRIX 2500 FROM B-52 MATCHES UP WELL WITH INTIMATE AFFAIRS

By J. Richard Roberts



station. The subwoofer box also contains the brains (BBE Processing combined with crossover) and driveshaft (amp) of the system. Together, they can be stacked and rolled into almost any event. Connector-wise, the satellites are hooked-up using Speakon™ cables front the base unit. Feeding into the system is relatively simple, with two XLR inputs and a gain knob at your disposal.

I found that this system excels for smaller events. I used it for a wedding of 150 people, and did a dance with red-lining, occasionally falling into clipping territory with the "sports announcement"-themed grand introductions that the couple requested. This was a case where owning more than one of these units would have come in handy, daisy chaining the units together to cover the larger crowd.

One other note warning for mobile entertainers. The finish on the satellite speakers makes holding onto them when mounting on tripods very difficult, and they are not equipped with handles. I would strongly suggest that future generations of these speakers come with handles to make set up safer.

The sound quality on this system was great. The BBE processing definitely differentiates this model in terms of clarity and bass response vs. previous Matrix systems. All in all, I would recommend this unit for beginner DJs or for any one looking for a well-matched, mobile system for smaller events. **MB**

Let's not talk about red pills or blue pills (that's been a bit overplayed this year), but let's talk about making the right choices. There are appropriate times and places for different kinds of sound systems. Employing a small system for a big event, but bringing a huge wall of sound to an intimate affair is not only overkill sound-wise but is also a needless waste of energy in transport and set up. Matching up the system to the event is the best way to let the gear shine.

In the age of super-powered speakers that can push crazy amounts of sound, the B-52 Matrix 2500 system comes across as a three-piece, 1600-watt, all-in-one solution for those that regularly perform 50- to 100-person wedding receptions. The main word that comes to mind when I think back on my time with the system is "easy."

The system consists of two 12" satellite speakers (tripod mountable; stands are not included) and an 18" subwoofer main

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The Truth About Bridal Lead Lists

4 STEPS TO AVOID WASTING TIME AND MONEY

By Stephanie Padovani

Bridal lead lists are available for sale from event producers, magazines or list brokers. For a relatively small fee, you get the contact information of local engaged couples.

The opportunity is enticing enough to part many a DJ with his hard earned cash. But there is absolutely nothing “affordable” about bad leads; they’re expensive in terms of time and opportunity cost.

Leads purchased in this way are typically poor quality. Here’s why:

- They’re full of dead emails and couples who’ve already booked their vendors.
- The same leads are often sold to dozens or hundreds of other wedding pros.
- They aren’t qualified as a good match for your particular business.
- They haven’t requested information from you, so your communication is equated with spam.

Based on informal surveys of our Book More Brides audience, only one out of 100 leads on these lists will even respond. You’ll have more luck attracting couples with smoke signals.

Still, the promise of these “cheap leads” may be too much to

resist. If you’re planning to pursue these leads, follow these steps.

#1: VET THE LIST BEFORE YOU BUY

Don’t take anything the list broker tells you as fact. Do your own research.

First, ask these questions of the list provider:

- How do you collect your leads?
- How do you qualify them?
- What are the demographics of the couples?
- If they sign up for your list, what exactly are these couples expecting to receive?

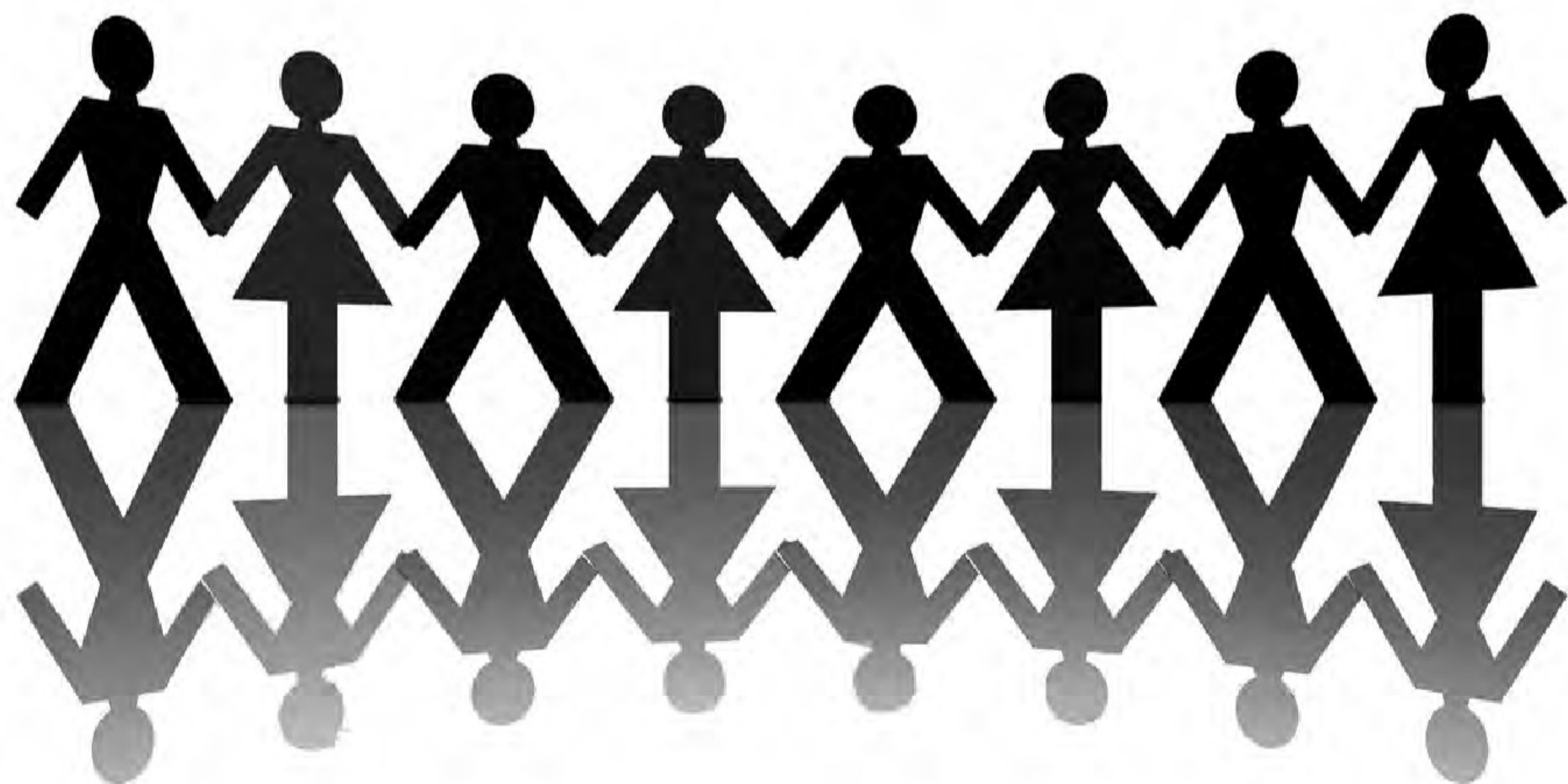
Second, ask for references of other wedding businesses who’ve had success with the list in the past. Call them and ask detailed questions about their experiences.

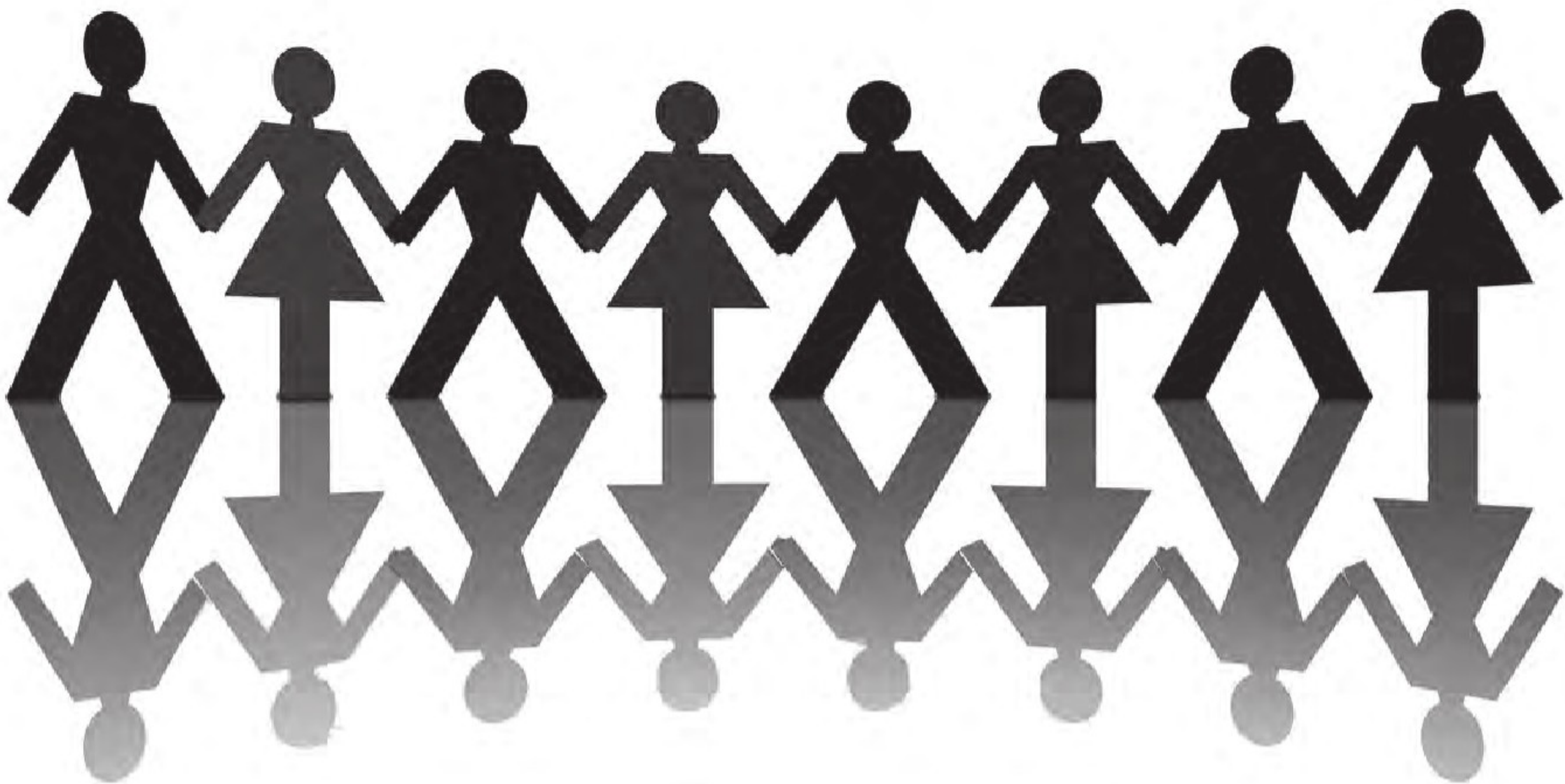
Third, search online for reviews of company selling the list. Check their Better Business Bureau listing for complaints. If anything seems fishy, don’t buy.

#2: CONSIDER WHETHER YOUR TARGET MARKET IS ON THE LIST

Now that you have some idea about the demographics of the couples on this list, is it a match for the ones you want to attract?

A good indicator would be the venues where the couple has booked their wedding or their zip codes. If these are a match for





your ideal couples, you may be in business.

If you can't get this information, use what you've learned about the company's lead collection process to determine whether the couples you want to attract are likely to be on the list.

#3: QUALIFY YOUR IDEAL LEADS WITH A POLARIZING OFFER

Let's say the lead list passes the vetting process and you decide to buy. Begin by qualifying them.

What can you put into an email or direct mail piece that will immediately separate the "good" leads (couples who are a match for you in terms of personality, style and budget) from the "bad" ones (couples who aren't)?

Deliberately craft your marketing message to alienate the brides and grooms who aren't a good match for you, and to irresistibly attract those who are a perfect fit. For example, if you are a DJ who specializes in high energy, dynamic entertainment, images of a club-style packed dance floor will appeal to your ideal couple, while they will repel those searching for low key entertainment.

#4: MAKE A COMPELLING OFFER AVAILABLE FOR A LIMITED TIME ONLY

You need to get these couples to take an action. What offer can you make that gets a response?

Discounts and coupons can be compelling, but they often attract budget-oriented clients. Instead, consider a

free bonus or a gift for everyone who books a meeting within a specific period of time. Don't forget to use personality and humor to connect with the couples who "get" you.

This weeds out bargain hunting couples and allows couples to qualify themselves with their response. Including a deadline gets them into action quickly.

THE TAKEAWAY

It's a better use of your time and money to create your own high-quality list of leads by attracting targeted website

traffic that subscribes to your email list, or by collecting them at your bridal show booth. But if you're going to purchase a list, know what you're getting and have a winning strategy to make the most of it.

Consider your audience:

- Budget audience, make a discount offer or coupon
- Strong call to action
- Be different - humor, personality, color

"What's interesting is that many of the brides who contacted me say that they liked my display at the show," Nick says. "Well, I wasn't at the show! My 6"x8" glossy cards were stuffed in the information bags...The organizer charges a fraction of the cost...to stuff the cards into the bags and it appears that I actually get a better response than being there." **MB**

There is absolutely nothing "affordable" about bad leads; they're expensive in terms of time and opportunity cost.



Stephanie Padovani and her husband, Jeff, are the dynamic husband-wife duo behind Book More Brides, the #1 marketing resource for the wedding industry. Visit BookMoreBrides.com/priceshopper to learn "How to Position Yourself as a Valued Wedding Expert in Only Five Minutes."

Battling for Independent Contractor Status

JUST BECAUSE YOU SAY IT, DOESN'T MAKE IT SO

By Mark E. Battersby

Although the concept of the independent contractor is a proven way for employers to achieve workforce flexibility and save money, it also represents a popular strategy that provides DJs a great deal of flexibility and, in many cases, lower tax bills. But combine those lower tax bills with the difficulty in determining who is and who isn't an "independent contractor," and you have the Internal Revenue Service's ongoing crackdown on "misclassification."

The Government Accountability Office estimates that worker misclassification costs the federal government \$2.7 billion per year, while both the IRS and the U.S. Department of Labor believe that up to 30 percent of employers are misclassifying workers.

Recent court cases, such as the suits brought against Uber and Lyft by their drivers in California, have resulted in both the IRS and Department of Labor announcing even more crackdowns on worker misclassification. In fact, cracking down on employee misclassification is a proven revenue generator for the IRS. But, should that crackdown strike fear into the hearts of mobile entertainers?

AN INDEPENDENT CONTRACTOR

What all independent contractors have in common is they're not considered "employees" of those who utilize their services. Usually what makes them "independent contractors" is their customers and clients say they are, usually so to avoid the payroll costs of having an employee.

Under common-law rules, anyone who performs services for another is an employee—if the one paying for the services can control what will be done and how it will be done. Therefore an employer-employee relationship exists when the person for whom services are performed has the right to control and direct the individual who performs the services, not only as to result, but also as to details and means. All independent contractors are considered to be self-employed and, therefore their earnings are subject to Self-Employment Tax.

While independent contracting is on the rise, true independent contractors differ from the quasi-freelancers created by companies such as Uber and others championing the so-called "gig" economy. Although those who work "gigs" appear to be a new class of free agent, in reality they have autonomy, yet not complete control.

Uber sets the fares for each service in each city based on its own formula, which

is calculated using either per-mile or per-minute rates, on top of a base fare. Genuine independent contractors determine and negotiate their own rates with clients. They possess refined and in-demand skills. They often bring a rare expertise that clients can't find in the typical labor pool. In other words, they operate as micro-business entities.

START-UP BASICS

For the most part, mobile entertainers are individuals who are hired to do a particular job, receiving payment only for the work being performed. Most mobile entertainers are business owners, and not their customers' employees. They do not receive employee benefits or the same legal protections as employees and are usually responsible for their own expenses.

As an independent contractor, a mobile entertainer is responsible for paying his or her own taxes, Social Security, unemployment taxes, workers' compensation, health insurance, and other benefits. The customer will not withhold taxes meaning, as a business owner, the independent contractor will be required to pay estimated taxes throughout the year, instead of once a year on April 15.

Becoming a true independent contractor means becoming a small, separate business entity. The nature of the working relationship between independent contractors and clients or customers is not without risk. By taking every precaution to establish a self-governing operation, an independent contractor can mitigate exposure to these risks—both for themselves and for the clients and customers of their mobile entertainment business.

PROOF POSITIVE

No less a body than the U.S. Supreme Court has said that there is no definition that solves all problems relating to the employer-employee relationship under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The Court has also said that determination of the relationship cannot be based on isolated factors or upon a single characteristic, but depends upon the circumstances of the whole activity. In general, an employee, as distinguished from an independent contractor who is engaged in a business of his or her own, is one who "follows the usual path of an employee" and is dependent on the business that they serve.

The IRS formerly used what was known as the "Twenty Factor" test. Today, under pressure, the IRS has attempted to simplify and refine the test, consolidating the twenty factors into eleven main tests and organizing them into three main groups:

Behavioral: Does the client or



Mark E. Battersby is a freelance writer based in the Philadelphia area. His features, columns and reports have appeared in leading trade magazines and professional journals since the early 1980s. When not actually writing, Mark spends most of his time digging for exciting tax and financial strategies to write about.

customer have the right to control what the worker does and how the worker does his or her job?

Financial: Are the business aspects of the worker's job controlled by the payer? This includes such things as how payment is made, whether expenses are reimbursed and who provides tools/supplies.

Type of Relationship: Are there written contracts or employee-type benefits such as a pension plan, insurance, vacation pay, etc.? Will the relationship continue and is the work performed a key aspect of the client or customer?

Obviously, there is no "magic" or set number of factors that makes a mobile entertainer an independent contractor or another individual an employee. The key is to look at the entire relationship, consider the degree or extent of the right to direct and control and, finally, to document each of the factors used to produce the proper label of worker or independent contractor.

If there is any doubt remaining after reviewing the three categories of evidence, Form SS-8, Determination of Worker Status for Purposes of Federal Employment Taxes and Income Tax Withholding can be filed with the IRS by either the mobile enter-

Becoming a true independent contractor means becoming a small, separate business entity.

after a gig ends. If the applicants were treated like employees by giving them strong direction or having them do work identical of that performed by W-2 workers, they can be labeled as employees. Fortunately, more "on-demand" platforms are beginning to ensure their

workforce is compliant with all labor laws.

Testifying at a recent Congressional hearing, U.S. Secretary of Labor, Thomas Perez was asked how more can be done to deter worker misclassification. He replied "... this problem's a national problem that has three sets of victims: the worker him or herself; the employers who play by the rules -- they can't compete for contracts, they can't compete for business because they pay their taxes; and then the tax collector, because when a business is cheating, they're not paying their workers comp taxes, unemployment taxes go up because the pool has grown smaller. It's a very significant problem. I believe that there's an important place for independent contractors, but I also believe that there's ample evidence that that's being abused."

Unfortunately, because a DJ, VJ or KJ thinks and calls him- or herself an independent contractor doesn't make it so. Merely

INDEPENDENT

tainer or the customer. Unfortunately, review of the facts and circumstances can take at least six months for the IRS to reach a determination.

THE EMPLOYER'S PERSPECTIVE

The IRS recently expanded its Voluntary Classification Settlement Program (VCSP), paving the way for more businesses to take advantage of this low-cost option for achieving certainty by reclassifying their workers as employees for future tax periods. VCSP also provides partial relief from federal payroll taxes for eligible employers who are currently treating their some or all of their workers as independent contractors and now want to treat them as employees.

Under the revamped program employers, other than those undergoing an employment tax audit, can qualify for VCSP. To be eligible for the VCSP, an employer must be treating workers as "nonemployees" and filed any required Form 1099s. What's more, employers cannot qualify if they are under audit by the DOL or state agency concerning the classification of these workers.

PITFALL

Those DJs, VJs and KJs who deal with Internet platforms should be aware of yet another crackdown on misclassified workers. After Uber and similar Court cases, many government agencies have begun looking for misclassification when workers who were paid as independent contractors file for unemployment

because customers and clients may classify a mobile entertainer as an independent contractor, doesn't mean that an independent contractor relationship exists.

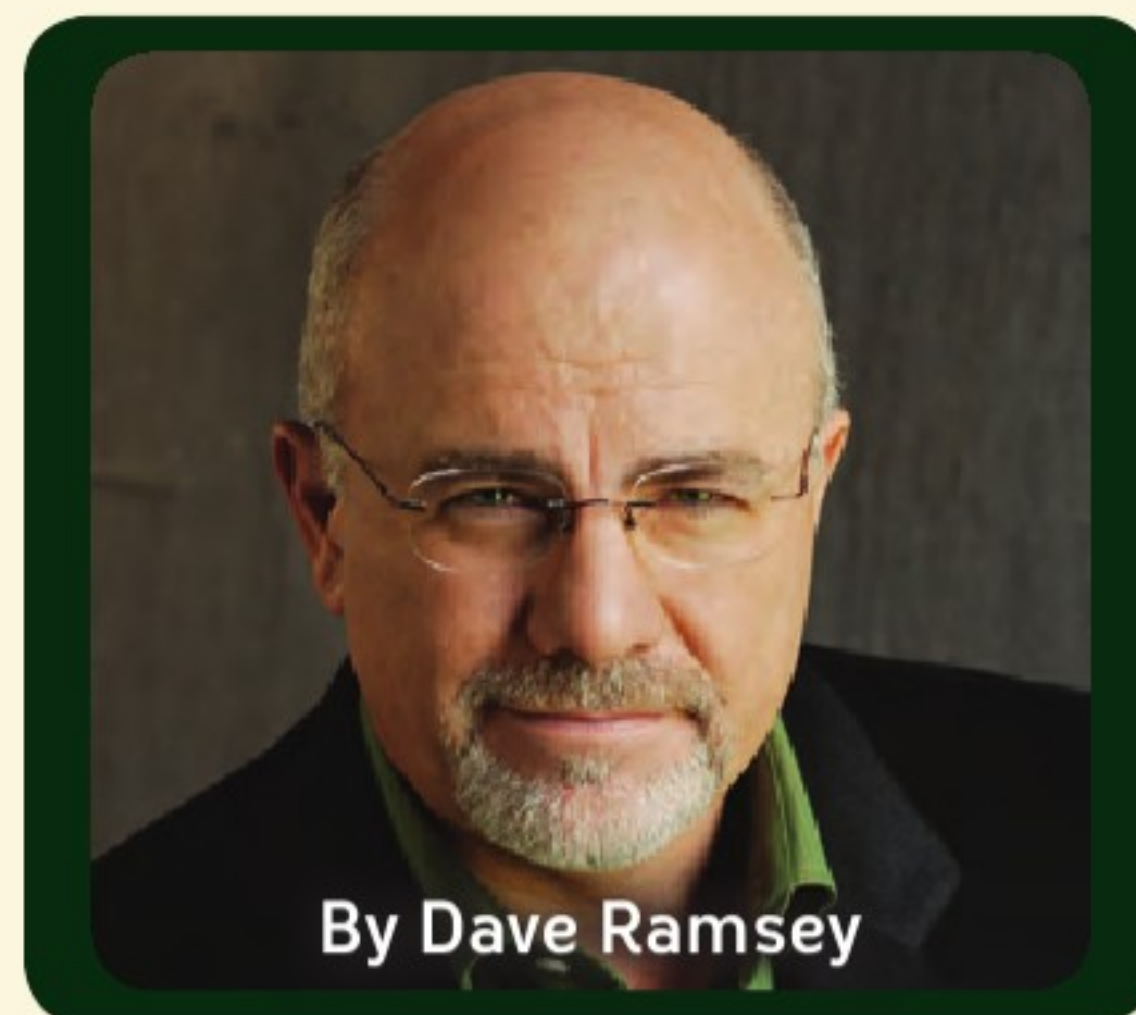
Independent contractors:

- Do not have the same legal rights and protections as employees.
- Are paid only for work performed. Clients and customers are not required to pay employee benefits under FLSA, including overtime and minimum wage.
- Are not covered under the client or customer's workers' compensation benefits
- Are not entitled to employee benefits
- Are not covered under the Equal Employment Opportunity laws, and
- Do not have their taxes withheld and paid by the client or customer, including income, FICA and unemployment.

A mobile entertainment business that employs others may find themselves liable for back taxes, employee benefits and penalties if they have mislabeled workers. And just as they and their clients and customers should be very careful to distinguish between employees and independent contractors, so should every mobile entertainer. Are you, your sub-contractors and others you work with, clearly "independent contractors?" **MB**

Dream It, Achieve It

PLANNING TO MAKE YOUR VISION A REALITY



By Dave Ramsey

Having a positive attitude is great, and dreaming about the future is essential. But you can't stop with just dreaming. Neither one of these will get you where you want to go, unless you roll up your sleeves and map out a step-by-step plan.

You see, goals are dreams and visions with work clothes on. I'm talking about leaving the strategic behind and focusing on the tactical. Setting goals and working



toward them is the heavy lifting part of the equation. Without them, you and your business are like a ship without a rudder.

The key is to turn your dreams into individually attainable pieces that will gradually create something special down the road. If you wait on outside variables to motivate your team, or change things in your personal life, you're going to wait a long time. You and your goals are the key ingredients. It's your responsibility to lead, and goal setting is an important key to winning in business and in life. Goals are the process of bringing your dreams down to earth. Then, with your feet planted firmly on the ground, you must

take actual, proactive steps to make your dreams and visions come true.

COMPONENTS OF GOALS

When setting goals, it is important to be very specific in what you want to achieve. Vagueness will only cause you and your team to be overwhelmed and disillusioned. As a leader, you do not want to become one of those dreamers who talks a lot and does nothing.

Let's use losing weight as an example. You can't simply say that you want to lose weight, because that is not specific. It may technically be measurable, but a solid goal should be both measurable and specific. A better way to set this goal would be to say that you want to lose 30 pounds, or have a waistline that is four inches smaller.

Planning a time frame will help you set realistic goals. If you don't have a time limit and deadline in place for achieving goals, you'll find that it's very difficult to break your overall goal down into micro-goals that measure your progress. Putting a time limit on your goals forces you to accept the reality of what must happen in order to achieve them.

GET IT IN WRITING

Almost everyone drops the ball on this one. When I talk to people about this practice, they always say it's a great idea to actually write down your goals. Still, few actually do this.

It's almost impossible to accomplish anything that matters without some kind of written blueprint. You wouldn't start to build a house without a plan, so why on earth would you attempt to build and

grow your business without one?

MAKE SURE THEY'RE YOUR GOALS

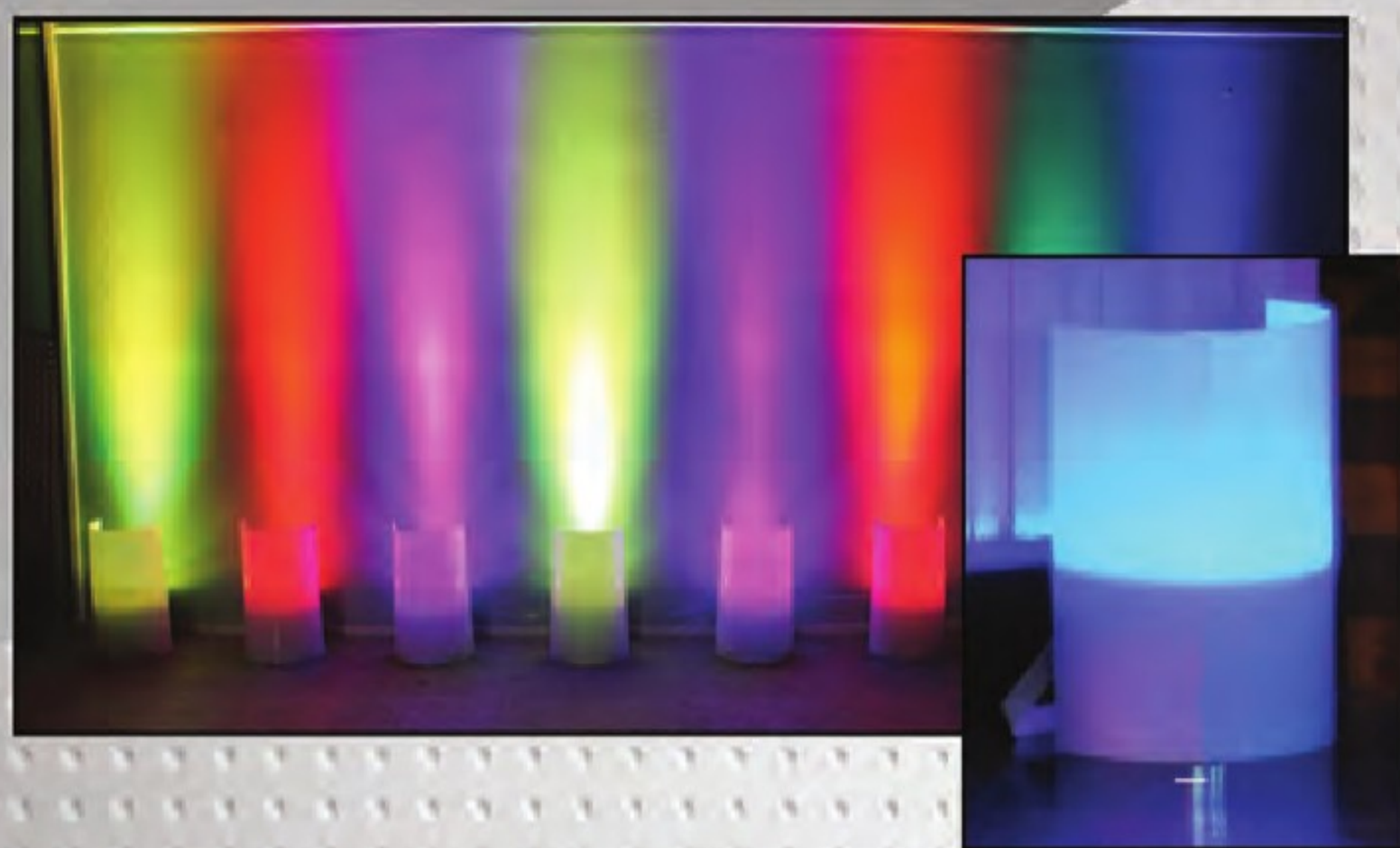
Pushing through difficult obstacles is the mark of a winner. After all, big goals require lots of courage and a strong backbone. But if your goals aren't really yours — if you're pursuing something because someone else wants you to — the chances of failure loom large.

Goals are funny creatures in that you have to absolutely and completely own them in order to have a chance of making them happen. You have to want to achieve success and see things through to the end because you love what you're doing — not because someone else envisioned the goal for you.

COMMUNICATE YOUR GOALS

Finally, as a leader you should always share your goals with your team. Imagine someone putting you in a dark room and asking you to find certain items inside that room. I suspect you would be pretty frustrated, and perhaps a little bit scared. You probably wouldn't do such a great job of accomplishing your task, either. Your team deserves to know what's going on inside your head and what you expect of them. Shared goals create communication and unity. You wouldn't just hop on a boat without knowing where it was going, so don't leave your team clueless, either! **MB**

*Dave Ramsey is America's trusted voice on money and business. He has authored five New York Times best-selling books, including **EntreLeadership** and **The Total Money Makeover**. **The Dave Ramsey Show** is heard by more than 8.5 million listeners each week on more than 550 radio stations. Follow Dave on the web at www.entreleadership.com.*

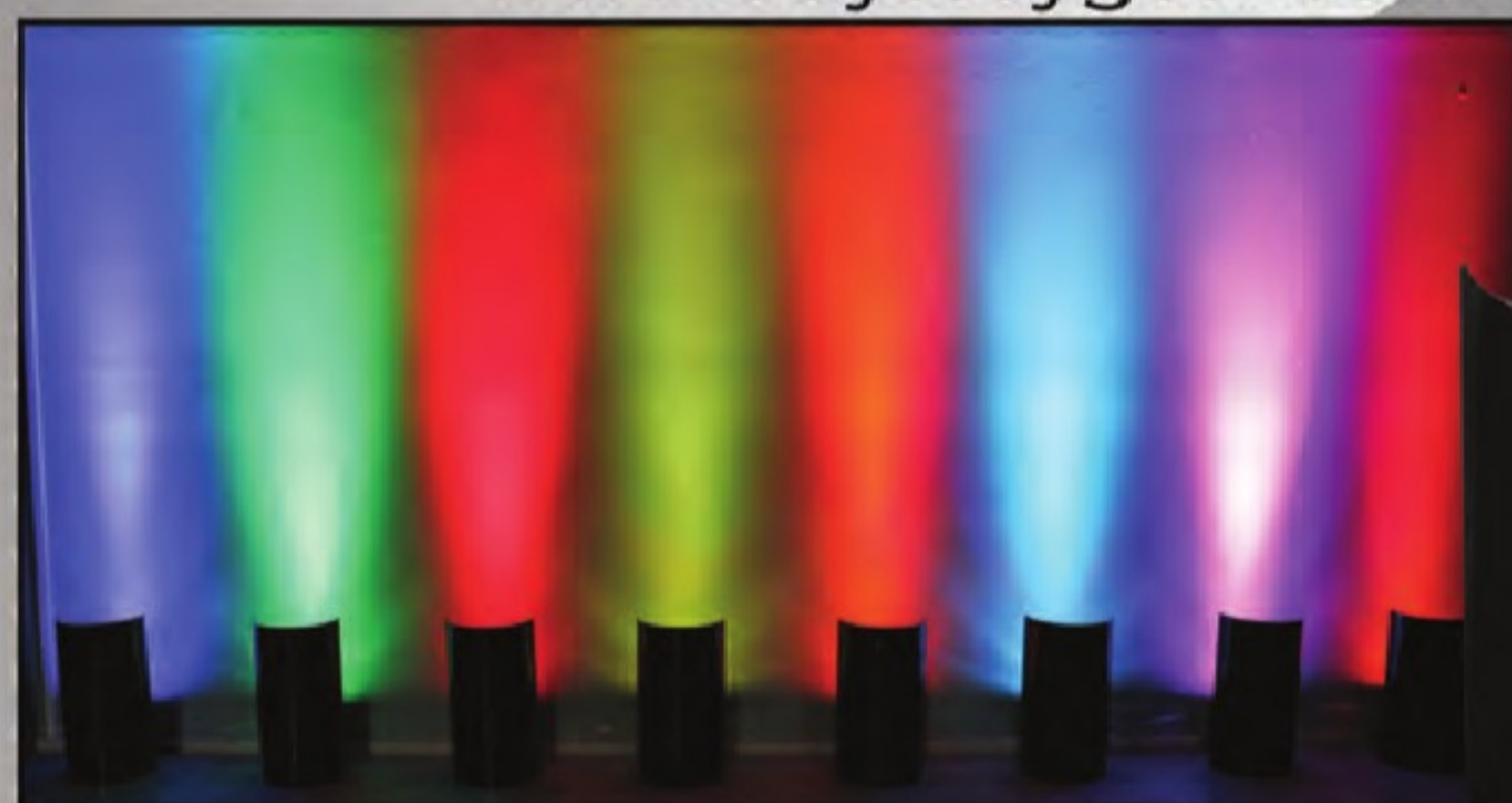


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Becoming Referable

IT'S A MATTER OF EARNING, NOT ASKING

By Jeffrey Gitomer

A good friend gave me a book about building your business through referrals. The author believes, “The best marketing strategy is to be referable.” He is correct. He writes, “Referability means that your very best clients and customers are continually cloning themselves—continually introducing you to those like themselves or better than themselves.”

Well, kind of—but not really clear.

According to the author, your referability depends upon four habits:

1. Show up on time.
2. Do what you say.
3. Finish what you start.
4. Say please and thank you.

Eh, no. Could being referable be that simple? The author asserts that these four habits convey respect and appreciation toward the customer. He says, if you're arrogant or erratic, you won't be referred, no matter how talented or charming you are. He says, if you're not getting enough referrals, cultivate the four habits. He is partially right. Very partially.

I say his four elements don't create referability—his four elements are a GIVEN in any business relationship. To be referable, you have to go WAY BEYOND showing up on time and delivering what you promise.

Those habits may have worked in 1955, when “Happy Days” was in full swing, but becoming referable and earning referrals in today's times (unhappy days) are far more complex.

In my experience, I have found that a referral is earned, not asked for. When you ask for one, you immediately put your relationship in an awkward position, especially if the customer is reluctant to give you one, and you keep pestering him or her.

Here's why: The one word definition of referral is risk.

When someone gives you a referral, it means they are willing to risk their relationship with the referred person or company. They have enough trust and faith in you to perform in an exemplary manner, and not jeopardize their existing friendship or business relationship.

Once you understand the definition of a referral, and realize how delicate, yet powerful, it is—you at once realize why you get them (or not)—and that you must become risk free in order to earn them.

Referrals are awkward to “ask for,” and often create discomfort on the part of the customer.

Here are the elements that breed proactive referrals:

1. Be likeable. This is the first prerequisite. Without a friendly relationship, there is no need to go further.
2. Be reliable. The company, the product, the service, AND you, must be “best,” and “there when needed.”
3. The customer considers you an expert in your field. To be referable, you must have an expertise that breeds customer confidence.
4. They trust you. The customer is CERTAIN that you will do everything in the referred party's best interest, like you have with theirs.
5. You have a track record of performance. You have already done the same thing with the customer and they're comfortable that you can repeat the performance.
- 5.5. They consider you valuable—a resource, not a salesman. Not just, “do what you say.” There's no real value there. I mean, provide value to the customer beyond your product and service. Value beyond the sale. Helping the customer to profit more, produce more, or some other form of value, either attached to your product or not. Not value in terms of you, value in terms of the customer. Referable value.

And there are telltale signs—clues that you “qualify” for a referral:

REFERRAL CLUE: Your phone calls are returned. This means there was a purpose, a value, or a friendship reason. Returned calls connote respect for who you are.

REFERRAL CLUE: You get reorders. This means they WANT to do business with you, and they LIKE to do business with you.

REFERRAL CLUE: There are no problems with service issues. Your interactions are smooth and your execution is flawless.

REFERRAL CLUE: They accept your lunch invitation. And the conversation is more personal than business.

Here's the secret: If the one word definition of referral is “risk,” then you must be risk free—or at least risk tolerable.

Here's the strategy that will work 100% of the time: Give your customer a referral FIRST. It will not only blow them away, they will become an advocate on your referral team.

Here's the report card: The referral you got turned into a sale.

If you want more information on the value of a referral, go to www.gitomer.com—register if you're a first time visitor—and enter REFERRAL in the GitBit box. **MB**



*Jeffrey Gitomer is the author of 12 best-selling books, including **The Sales Bible**, **The Little Red Book of Selling**, **The Little Gold Book of Yes!** and **21.5 Unbreakable Laws of Selling**. His real-world ideas and content are also available as online courses at www.GitomerVT.com. For information about training and seminars visit www.Gitomer.com or www.GitomerCertifiedAdvisors.com, or email Jeffrey personally at salesman@gitomer.com.*

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Following Up: Worth the Effort

JUST...ONE...MORE...TIME...

By Jason Weldon

Late last year, our sales team had a meeting to discuss how we could streamline the process of the follow up. The one thing we all love doing right? I mean, we just love calling and emailing and texting and snapchatting and mailing our prospects for some kind of answer. Even if it is a “no.”

For the few that say “yes,” it seems like there are many more who just ignore us, as if we will go away and they don’t have to hurt our feelings. Clearly they don’t understand that we will all be okay! I still don’t understand that rationale, but hey, it is part of the business.

One of the big topics in the meeting was the number of times we follow up with prospects and if it was worth it. Should we continue to do it as many times as we do? Or is it just taking

be able to make a decision on whether to keep doing that many follow ups. It was actually costing us money at that point.

Our team, including myself, was pretty sure we were going to be able to drop the fifth follow up and maybe even the fourth. I mean, if they haven’t returned our email or phone call after the third follow up, are they really going to want to book us on any more follow ups?

We set our target number: the number that we had figured out would be the amount we would be willing to give up due to the amount of time it was taking. Let’s say that number was 10. If we booked less than 10 weddings on the fourth and fifth follow up, we simply would stop doing them because it just wasn’t worth it. So we started.

By June, the numbers were shocking. The amount of bookings at the fourth and fifth follow up had already hit 27. There was no need to continue the research. We needed to continue to do all the follow ups and the entire process that was in place. Stopping it was not an option.

I mention all of this because in our other research with other wedding professionals we have found many companies that don’t even do two follow ups! And here we are doing five and still booking them. Many of them gave reasons for not getting back to us. School, work, family things and so on. All were glad that we were persistent and appreciated that we didn’t give up on them. While I’m sure some of the others that didn’t book us were tired of getting the follow ups, the ones that did book were actually happy. Imagine that!

Following up in a professional, systematic way is crucial for your business to get business. Especially in the wedding industry today. It seems like prospects just email away all day to 10, 20, 30 companies at a time and just wait for the “right time” to get back them. One of the best ways is to have a clear, effective and efficient strategy for following up. What is yours?

Here are a few things you may want to consider:

- Make it personal. Automated emails are just that, automated, and everyone knows it.
- Do a phone call OR email, not both at the same time. Desperation is not a good look.
- Be honest with them. Don’t try and force their hand by telling them about “You may be booked up” or “Date is almost filled” or something along those lines.
- Ask them to get back to you with a “no” if they have booked someone. This way you can stop bothering them. That works for me a lot!
- Have a structure in place that you do every time, all the time. Don’t be all willy-nilly. Have a plan that makes sense and then work it.

Follow ups clearly matter. I know it may seem like hard work and even a waste of time doing them, but it pays off. Our little research project surprised us and confirmed just how important this aspect of sales is. **MB**



up to much time that we could spend on other things? At that time, our system was to do five follow ups that lasted a total of roughly four weeks. That frequency, multiplied by roughly 1,500 leads a year, can be very time-consuming, as you can imagine. So if we could shave one or two “touches” off, it might be worth it.

So we went back and did some research. We looked at every client that booked us and the particular follow up that they booked us at. So we started in January and went month by month, looking at each confirmed wedding. We knew that most of the people that were going to book us would have booked us within the first two follow ups, that was a given. We expected a little less at three follow ups, even less at four and barely any at five follow ups. And if the amount at five follow ups was so little, let’s say less than five confirmed weddings or so, we would

Jason Weldon is a wedding business consultant who specializes in small to medium-sized companies that want to grow their business. His objective is to help guide people through organizing their thoughts and laying the groundwork for a better, more successful start-up. He currently lives in Philadelphia and is also the president of Synergetic Sound and Lighting, Inc. and DJ and A/V company.



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